THE
HOUND & HORN

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

S. Foster Damon's new book of poems, *Tilts at the Moon* will be published shortly.

Wallace Stevens is the author of *Harmonium.*

Dale Warren is the Publicity Director of Houghton Mifflin Company. He graduated from Princeton in 1919.

Kenneth Burke was for some time one of the editors of *The Dial.* There is a volume of his short stories called *White Oxen.*

William Carlos Williams is the author of numerous books of verse and prose. He received the Dial Award two years ago.

Norman Foerster is a professor of English at the University of North Carolina, and the author of *American Criticism.* He is editing a collaborative work on Humanism to appear shortly.

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COMMENT

A Note on Policy

WITH this issue THE HOUND & HORN begins its third year. We hope that a brief statement of policy will make clear what interests and purposes bind together the varied contents of the magazine. The "Harvard Miscellany" has been dropped from the title because it misrepresented our intention. However admirable it is to represent something definite, a university, a political movement, a program for art, we have no real connection with Harvard. The fact that Harvard men have hitherto been the principal contributors and the subjects of many of the articles is largely accidental, a matter of geography and accessibility. The word "Miscellany" is also unfortunate as descriptive of THE HOUND & HORN. If a distinctive attitude, recognizable as common to the group writing for THE HOUND & HORN does not in time become increasingly approved, we have no reason for continued existence.

THE HOUND & HORN is primarily a magazine devoted to the arts and letters; and our main interest is in furthering them. We do not believe that any special dogmas, as humanism, classicism, surrealism, Catholicism, America, will of themselves create art and letters. Criticism has no meaning and no value until a work of art has first justified itself aesthetically, until it is accepted as a work of art. A sound philosophy will not produce a great work of art and a great work of art is no guarantee that the ideas of the artist are sound. Consequently our standard for judging the arts is technical. We demand only that the given work should be well done. We may prefer that the talents which endow any work of art with its initial importance were differently employed. We may feel that certain false ideas mar a work of art and partly defeat the artist's aim. But a picture, a poem, and a story have their intrinsic value quite apart from their association with theory.

The sole unity that we seek in the criticism we print is likewise one of merit, and merit in criticism, as in philosophy, is not simply a matter of being right or wrong. It is not necessary that a man should share our beliefs for us to publish either his critical or creative work. What is important, beyond the minimum of agreement which a common subject yields, is clearness, logical intensity, and awareness of difficulty. Consequently our criticism, both in book reviews and in essays, will not presuppose any platform, nor will it aim directly at establishing a convention and an orthodoxy. What we really ask of our criticism is that it be critical, that it should seize the central point of any subject, and discuss that with all the learning, logic and insight it can command.

The reason for so much criticism in a magazine devoted to the arts and letters is that the artist himself is highly self-conscious and profoundly affected by the intellectual and spiritual currents of the time. Accordingly an analysis of any man who has felt and reflected, whether his field be history, religion, philosophy, criticism, or literature and art themselves, has its place. The intellectual celibacy of the modern learned classes which Professor Whitehead deplores, is particularly true of recent critics. It is our hope to wed critic and artist, and so further coöperation and understanding. Distances in America and the impossibility of frequent conversation seem to render a magazine the ideal medium for the intercourse needed. THE HOUND & HORN is simply an instrument, a means for cohesion: its success depends on the truth or falsity of our faith that artist and critic can work together for their mutual betterment.

THE ODYSSEY IN DUBLIN

"ART has to reveal to us ideas, formless spiritual essences," says A. E. in James Joyce's *Ulysses*.[1] "The supreme question about a work of art is out of how deep a life does it spring."

A. E., otherwise George Russell, seems to be the only member of the Irish school whom Joyce treats with respect; and his words may safely be taken as indicating what Joyce's own theories may be. We are therefore justified in examining Joyce's fat volume as an expression of ideas and as a plumbing of the depths of the soul.

This book is perhaps the most thorough-going literary attempt to analyse the ancient problem of evil since Goethe's *Faust*. Joyce is well aware that he risks comparison with Dante and Milton, among others; he provokes and challenges such comparisons. As one might guess from the title, his book is a deliberate contrast throughout with the *Odyssey*. Moreover, George Russell has stated that it is the *Inferno* of an unfinished trilogy; so Dante is involved. In the text, the father-son problem of *Hamlet* is discussed, and has influenced the plot radically. To the names of Homer, Dante, and Shakspere, we must add that of Blake, for all the modern Irishmen have read him.[2] But as far as I know, neither Milton nor Goethe have influenced the conception of *Ulysses*

[1] *Ulysses* by James Joyce. Published for the Egoist Press, London, by John Rodker, Paris, 1922. Page 177. The type was entirely reset in the eighth printing (May, 1926); page references vary slightly after that date.

[2] Blake is referred to or quoted on pages 24, 33, 34, 37, 177, 178, 190, 197, 373, 377, 554.

(unless Stephen Dedalus be a compound of Satan and Mephistopheles); perhaps their justifications of the ways of God were too Protestant.

Whether or not Homer intended his *Odyssey* to be pure romance, or a symbol of man's wayfaring through the world, no one now can say definitely. Probably Greek criticism started with the allegorizing of Homer;[3] the Stoic grammarian, Crates of Mallos, in Pergamos, established it as a regular method about 150 B. C.;[4] and four centuries later, when the Neoplatonists accepted Ulysses not as a man but Man, Porphyry wrote his celebrated *On the Cave of the Nymphs*, in which he ingeniously conjectured that the return of the hero to his native land was the return of the soul to eternity. But whether or not Porphyry was right, it is impossible today to read the *Odyssey* without discerning a significance that transcends mere story. Sirens and circes and odysseys have even invaded the popular speech, and thence the dictionaries. The parallels which Joyce has drawn are hinted at in his title, and briefly indicated on his manuscript; and from the first, critics have demonstrated that parallels can be traced, step by step, from cover to cover.[5] Parallel-hunting, however, has its dangers: pursued too far and too blindly it becomes a puzzle-game, not an illumination.

Nor does Joyce follow Homer too closely. He changes freely the events themselves and their chronological order.

[3] George Saintsbury: *History of Criticism.* New York (1900). Vol. I, p. 9.

[4] Karl Vossler: *Mediaeval Culture*, trans. Lawton. New York (1929). Vol. I, p. 127.

[5] Valery Larbaud: James Joyce (*La Nouvelle Revue Française*, nouvelle serie, no. 103 [April 1, 1922], pp. 385-409; also *The Criterion*, Vol. I, no. 1 [October, 1922], pp. 94-103). See also Herbert S. Gorman: *James Joyce*, New York, 1924; and Paul Jordan Smith: *A Key to the Ulysses of James Joyce*, Chicago, 1927.

For example, his Ulysses and Telemachus descend together into Hades; there Ulysses encounters Circe, and Telemachus the mother's ghost; whereas in Homer, Telemachus does not descend into Hades, or meet his mother's ghost, and Circe does not dwell there. Joyce simply uses the Homeric characters and incidents for their psychological significance, not for the romantic narrative; they are materials to be used freely as the creator wishes, not a pattern to be copied absolutely.

Sometimes this parallelism is obvious, yet without much meaning. The death and burial of Patrick Dignam correspond in general outlines to the death and burial of Elpenor; and both ghosts appear in Hades. But the parallel ends without casting any particular light on the book; and a birth is put in later, to balance it, without any apparent Homeric source. On the other hand, when we discover that the Irish intellectuals are the Lotus-eaters, while the singers at the Ormond are the Phaeacians (whose life, A. E. states on page 179, is the ideal life), we may trace an implied criticism of those intellectuals, who seek to "creepycrawl after Blake's buttocks into eternity": their art is effete; while Simon Dedalus, singing "When first I saw," from *Martha*, may be vulgar but he is honest. Then we identify Simon with Demodocus,[6] who sang to the Phaeacians about Ulysses, while that hero sat nearby and wept; and even so, Mr. Bloom waxes sentimental over the song that expresses his yearning for his own Martha.

We shall not bother to track down the details of these parallelisms; they might lead us too far astray; we shall only indicate those which help us to understand Joyce's work better.

The influence of Dante's *Divine Comedy* is not so obvious,

[6] This identification is new; I may add to it the theory that Malachi Mulligan, Stephen Dedalus's friend, is Mentor, rather than Mercury, as is generally supposed.

yet I think that it is perfectly demonstrable. In his epic, Dante discovers that he is lost in the forest of Error, and is hindered by various beasts from escaping; then, persuaded by Reason (Virgil), he determines to face the evil that baffles him, and thus find the path to God. In the *Inferno* he beholds the sins of the world, and the worm at its core is Lucifer, man's inhumanity to man. In the *Purgatorio* he discovers the Seven Deadly Sins in himself, and expiates them; at the top of the mountain he has thus climbed he finds the Earthly Paradise. In the *Paradiso*, guided by Faith (Beatrice), he plunges into the mental world,[7] soaring higher and higher until he experiences the mystical ecstasy, which is the climax of existence, the justification of everything, and the vision of God. Thus there are three levels in Dante's scheme of things: the hell of the exterior world, the purgatory of his own consciousness, and the paradise of the supersensuous.

Joyce uses these three levels, and without some recognition of them we cannot understand his book. But he does not treat them as spatially or temporally separate: they are co-existent and interpenetrative. Most of the characters in the book appear to live wholly in the first plane: the hell of this world, where they seem to be very much at home. Those persons, however, whose minds Joyce lays open for us (as Dante laid open his own mind to himself), live in Purgatory. They are constantly suffering for and expiating their sins. Though they do not suspect the existence of a Paradise, a Paradise exists — the ideal within is the very thing that makes them suffer. But its existence shines clear only for a few brief flashes, which we must discuss later.

Shakspere could not give Joyce any solution for the prob-

[7] He passes through Hell and Purgatory in the body, but Paul-like will not say that he entered Paradise in the flesh. (*Paradiso* I, 73-5).

lem of evil, for he had no solution. Evil to him was a fact, a gordian knot that only death could cut. In *Hamlet*, everyone is baffled and overcome: insight, wisdom, power, convention, innocence — all these prove of no avail against the terrible consequences of the secret crime. But the knot itself is of a fascinating intricacy. Stephen Dedalus has his theory: he believes that the ghost of Hamlet's father is Shakspere himself. But like many another commentator, Stephen is beholding his own problems in the Mirror of Nature. For he himself is Hamlet, the dispossessed son — or, in Homeric symbol, Telemachus, the lad in search of a father; and Bloom, the Ulysses of the book, is the father in search of a son.

Ulysses, then, is composed of these three elements: the symbolic narrative of the *Odyssey*, the spiritual planes of the *Divine Comedy*, and the psychological problem of *Hamlet*. Homer furnishes the plot, Dante the setting, and Shakspere the motivation.

But all these things are concentrated into the chance doings of a few people on a particular day in Dublin. Homer, Dante, Milton, and Goethe, had used the entire universe as they knew it for the scene of their poems. Dante indeed compressed his journey into three days: Good Friday in Hell, Holy Saturday in Purgatory, and Easter in Paradise; but Milton included all time as well as all space, for *Paradise Lost* looks back to the proclamation of the Christ in Heaven, and forward to the Last Judgment. Joyce, however, abandons epical vastness for the narrowness of the neo-Aristotelian dramatic Unities. The Time is one day — June 16, 1904; the Place is one city — Dublin; the Plot is a single action — the meeting of Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom.

Yet it was Blake, not Aristotle, who made this method possible. Blake enlarged the epical vision until extremes met: the

largest of things were contained in the smallest. Concentrate as hard as possible on the Minute Particulars, and Eternity will appear. A wild flower contains heaven, a grain of sand the world. And this method is Blake's chief contribution to *Ulysses*. Joyce, instead of enlarging his gaze to include everything which the telescope and microscope may reveal, narrows it upon the nearest and commonest things, that he may stare the harder. "To trace the genealogies of these high mortal miseries," Melville had written in *Moby-Dick*,[8] "carries us at last among the sourceless primogenitures of the gods." And "any object, intensely regarded, may be a gate of access to the incorruptible eon of the gods," A. E. told Malachi Mulligan and Stephen Dedalus.[9] So Joyce intensely regards the vulgar, the filthy — all that is most corruptible; *Introibo ad altare Dei* is the first speech in his book.[10]

Plunging into the book, one finds oneself in the full confusion of a city hubbub — a welter of facts, a simmering chaos of clueless allusions. Advertisements, phrases from popular songs, casual obscenities, headlines, boisterious tag-ends of conversations, the sound of bells, bits of church services, quotations from fashion magazines, puns, passages out of popular novels, fragments of *Hamlet*, blasphemies — all these surge and eddy together in a lively jumble. We find ourselves in an unfamiliar city that is busily going about its business, without stopping to explain anything to strangers, who are rather stunned by the uproar.

Just as Stravinsky built *Petroushka* out of hand-organ tunes,

[8] Ch. CVI (World's Classics, p. 552).

[9] P. 396.

[10] These are the first words of the Mass. The Mass symbolizes the Crucifixion. This world is the crucifixion of man. Dante voyages through the Inferno of this world on Good Friday.

accordions, dancing gypsies, and cheap waltzes, so Joyce weaves the texture of his book out of vulgar talk and vulgar literature; and he does this with a gusto which beats Cummings and Sandburg, and indeed has been generally forgotten since the days of Smollett. Yet there is singularly little fun in all the gusto. We overhear smutty jokes, but they are not addressed to us, as audience. An atrabilious, sardonic light lies over the whole city, and gives it something the aspect of a city in a nightmare. Terror, pity, and above all, disgust, assail us on all sides. It seldom occurs to us to laugh.[11]

What particularly depresses us at first is the frankness of the text. Most people manage to scramble through *Ulysses* for the first time by leaping from obscenity to obscenity, like Eliza crossing the ice. One's attention is turned violently upon the very things it normally avoids. We feel as though we were forced, while brushing our teeth, to study the washbowl. But on second reading, all these things fall into their places. Though Dublin, in 1904, evidently did not have a decent system of American plumbing, we know that these disagreeable facts exist; we remember also that anyone who lives in a big city hears daily all these hitherto unprinted words; and now they fall as flatly upon the eye as they did upon the ear.

Dante also recorded obscenities as an essential part of his Inferno (his picture of the world); but his obscenities are fantastic, symbolic, impossible. Joyce's are realistic, vulgar,

[11] It is true that this book has been discussed as a comic masterpiece; for example, by Edmund Wilson, Jr., in his review for *The New Republic*, vol. xxvi, no. 396 (July 5, 1922), and especially by Edwin Muir in his volume, *Transition* (New York, 1926). Mr. Muir, however, qualifies his stand somewhat: "One feels again and again in *Ulysses* that the uproariousness of the farce, the recklessness of the blasphemy, is wildest where the suffering of the artist has been most intense" (p. 22). We are indeed often led towards laughter, but pity or disgust usually dominates our emotion.

indecent. For of such details is a Hell really made. And the inhabitants of his city, like Swedenborg's devils, prefer the filth because they would be vastly uncomfortable clean. Joyce and Dante and Swedenborg (not to mention Callot and the Brueghels), are really at one here: only, Joyce has translated their symbols back into fact.

He is not concerned with indecency for its own sake, but for its value as fact. He is coldly photographic and phonographic. He knows that the facts will prove the ancient belief of Pythagoras and Plato that this world is hell; and his mere recording of them is in itself a tremendous curse upon them.

This world is no stage-Hell with a Miltonic landscape of black flames and brazen gates; it is a very banal, lively, modern city, where men die of drink, where children are born in agony, where love is supplanted by lust, and where religion is reduced to empty ceremony or equally empty blasphemy — the lowest facts of this life in all their stark and hideous vulgarity. The inhabitants of this world are quite at home; they are as exuberant in vitality as Dante's devils, and as coarse and cruel in their sense of humor. A practical joke sends the half-insane Denis Breen rambling in a rage over the city, in spite of his wife's desperate efforts to get him home; and the whole town enjoys and collaborates in the joke. Lord John Corley, out of a job, begs in the streets at night; the woman on Ormond Quay who asked in vain for Bloom's washing reappears in the role of a prostitute. The city is a place of brutality and filth and pettiness; it is the apotheosis of the cheap. Tragedy there is reduced to ignoble farce. We behold no thunder-scarred Monarch ruling this realm of irresponsible imps; we search in vain for Dante's sullen Lucifer or Milton's proud Satan or Goethe's negating Mephistopheles. If there is any such personality, it is rather that mighty Vulgarian who

possessed the soul of Mr. Badman from the first, who strove in vain with Palamabron, and who played like a cat with his predestined victim, Enoch Soames.[12] But it is impossible to find his throne. We are as appalled and as baffled as Los, on a similar journey:

Fearing that Albion should turn his back against the Divine Vision,
Los took his globe of fire to search the interiors of Albion's
Bosom, in all the terrors of friendship entering the caves
Of despair & death to search the tempters out, walking among
Albion's rocks & precipices, caves of solitude & dark despair,
And saw every Minute Particular of Albion degraded & murder'd,
But saw not by whom; they were hidden within in the minute particulars
Of which they had possess'd themselves, and there they take up
The articulations of a man's soul and laughing throw it down
Into the frame, then knock it out upon the plank, & souls are bak'd
In bricks to build the pyramids of Heber & Terah. But Los
Search'd in vain; clos'd from the minutia, he walk'd difficult.
He came down from Highgate thro' Hackney & Holloway towards London
Till he came to old Stratford, & thence to Stepney & the Isle
Of Leutha's Dogs, thence thro' the narrows of the River's side,
And saw every minute particular: the jewels of Albion running down
The kennels of the streets & lanes as if they were abhorr'd:
Every Universal Form was become barren mountains of Moral
Virtue, and every Minute Particular harden'd into grains of sand,
And all their tendernesses of the soul cast forth as filth & mire. . . .

(Blake: *Jerusalem*, 31: 2-21)

But soon we begin to discover clues in the chaos. The whole book is bound tightly together with a vast system of cross-

[12] The references are to Bunyan's *Life and Death of Mr. Badman*, Blake's *Milton*, and Beerbohm's *Seven Men*.

references.[13] We are given a puzzle picture to reconstruct; and when we put the fragments together, they fit. An incident is mentioned in one place, expanded in a second, and explained in a third. On page 216, an arm is seen flinging a coin from a window to a one-legged sailor; on page 699, we learn that the arm was Marion Bloom's. Sandwichmen bearing the letters H. E. L. Y'S wind in and out of the action. The viceregal cavalcade rides across the city, and as it receives the salutations of various people, pulls a whole section of the book together. Mr. Bloom has a potato in his pocket on page 55; he feels it there again on page 175; on page 404 he is informed that it is no good as a preventative of rheumatism; on page 414, we learn that it was his poor mama's panacea; two pages later, he makes sure that it is still in his pocket; on the next page, he remembers how it once fell out of his mother's pocket; on page 450, Zoe Higgins takes it from him; twenty pages later, it is hailed as a Preservative against Plague and Pestilence; on page 496, Bloom regrets giving it up; on page 518, he asks Zoe for it back, as a relic of his mother's. And that is but one

[13] The germ of this method may be found in Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year*. He obtains his effect of verisimilitude (and incidentally swells his pamphlet to book-size), by all manner of repetitions, delayed and broken anecdotes, and so forth.

But the *Journal* relies for its larger sense of composition solely on the curve of the disease: its rise and fall. It has nothing of the elaborate structure of *Ulysses*. As Ezra Pound pointed out in the *Mercure de France* (June 1, 1922), Joyce has followed the musical structure known as the sonata-form. Stephen's problems constitute the first theme; Bloom's the second; and after a long development section, in which these themes are extended and interwoven, the two themes are wedded in Part III, the recapitulation.

We may also note that the book is built in groups of threes. The first three sections (Part I), state Stephen's problems; the next three state Bloom's. Then the courses of the two begin to interweave; and each third section brings a climax. In the library, Stephen unknowingly declares who he is. At Kiernan's Bloom declares himself also. In night-town, both face their own problems. Part III then brings the two together and separates them, the third section being the epilogue devoted to Mrs. Bloom.

of the things in his pockets! There are literally thousands of such cross-references, that tie the seeming chaos into a perfectly functioning city. Joyce's control of his material is amazing: no one has pointed out as yet a single inconsistency, though his book involves not only contents of pockets and contents of minds, but the detailed pasts of a half dozen people. Some day, a concordance of all these facts should be published.

Fairly soon, we begin to remember these references — some of them, at least; we recognize some of the people when they reappear; we become more familiar with the lay of the streets. And we find out what is happening.

The outward events of Thursday, June 16, 1904, were trivial enough. It was a sunny day, which some people found hot, though there were occasional clouds that covered the sun; and after sunset there was a brief thunder-shower that cooled the city off refreshingly. The newspapers were full of the latest American holocaust — the *General Slocum*, a three-decker excursion boat filled with women and children on a Sunday-school picnic, had burned to the water-line in the East River, New York; deaths were estimated variously from over six hundred to a round thousand. The horrible details quite eclipsed the latest Japanese success in her war against Russia: a big victory at Fuchou, on the railroad seventy miles north of Port Arthur. Of far more concern to Dubliners was the spread of the hoof-and-mouth disease among the Irish cattle, which had caused already the slaughter of many head.

It was Gold Cup day at Ascot, the most fashionable race-course in England — a day still remembered (in the British Isles) because the favorite, the famous mare Sceptre, weakened at the end, and was passed by Throwaway, against whom the odds had been twenty to one. Betting had run high in Dublin; that evening many persons were celebrating or drown-

ing their sorrows. Mrs. Bandmann Palmer played in *Leah* (she had taken the role of Hamlet the night before); the Elster Grimes Opera Co. presented *The Lily of Killarney*. Posters announced other attractions, especially Marie Kendall, soubrette, and Eugene Stratton, black-face comedian. There were still some posters remaining of the Keogh-Bennett boxing-match, which had taken place on May 20; other posters announced that soon Dr. Alexander Dowie, self-styled Elijah, and the founder of Zion City in America, would preach at Merrion Hall on the approaching end of the world. Lord Dudley was to open the Mirus bazaar for funds for Mercer's hospital that afternoon; in the evening there were to be fireworks.

A man had been drowned nine days before at Sandycove; his body had not yet turned up.

Altogether, it was a typical day.

That morning, Stephen Dedalus, aged 22, gave his morning classes at Mr. Deasy's school and received his monthly pay; then took a letter of Mr. Deasy's on the hoof-and-mouth disease to the office of the *Evening Telegram* for publication. After treating the pressmen to some drinks, he went to the library, where he tried to explain his theories of *Hamlet* to George Russell and other literary lights, in hopes of selling an article to *Dana*; here he was joined by Malachi Mulligan, who shared his lodgings at the Martello Tower, and who had been expecting Stephen to turn up and provide drinks for lunch. Later in the day, Stephen wandered over to the Holles Street Maternity Hospital, where Mrs. Mina Purefoy was giving birth to a boy; there Stephen provided drinks for the medical students. Mulligan joined the party; and after more drinking they set out to make a night of it. Tagging along with the party, neither in nor out of it, was one Mr. Bloom.

THE ODYSSEY IN DUBLIN

Leopold Paula ("Poldy") Bloom, aged 38, advertising solicitor for the *Freeman*, had risen that morning and got his wife's breakfast for her in bed. He then went to the post-office for a letter from one Martha Clifford, with whom he was holding a sentimental correspondence under a false name. After having bathed at the public baths, he went to the burial of Patrick Dignam. On his return from the cemetery, he tried to land an advertisement for his paper, and went to the library to look up the original form of the ad. After a delayed lunch, he waited in a bar for Martin Cunningham, and was insulted by an anti-Semitic Nationalist who threw a biscuit-tin after him because Bloom reminded him that Christ was a Jew. He walked on the beach in the dusk, and eyed a young girl there. Then he went to the Holles St. Hospital to enquire after Mrs. Purefoy; there he found a rather noisy party, at which Stephen Dedalus, professor and poet, was getting rather tipsy.

Being invited to take a drink, Mr. Bloom joined them, but contributed little to the conversation. The party left the hospital for Burke's, where there was more drinking; then it broke up. At the railroad station Stephen Dedalus made a scene when Mulligan and an English friend of his, Haines, were trying to slip away; there was a vague, drunken fight of some sort. Then Dedalus and a medical student, Lynch, departed for night-town, Mr. Bloom anxiously following them. He lost sight of them, but found them at Mrs. Bella Cohen's. In the midst of the jollification, Dedalus suddenly turned white, smashed the lamp, and ran out. Bloom, running after him, found him in an argument with two drunken soldiers, one of whom knocked him down. Lynch vanished during the excitement; but Bloom stood by Dedalus, risking the notoriety that might follow the inquiries of the police. When

all was smoothed over, Bloom roused Stephen, took him to a cabman's shelter for some coffee, then suggested that he go home with him and have some cocoa instead. They went, but Stephen refused to spend the night there, and Bloom went to bed; his wife waking, he told her of some Italian lessons he had arranged for Stephen to give her. He also told her that he wanted his breakfast in bed next morning with two fresh eggs.

But though this is about all that the two main characters in the book do, such peregrinations in squalor are only outward and accidental. They tell almost nothing of the real plot. That lies in those thoughts which choke even mental utterance as they emerge in the mind; here Purgatory begins. On this plane — the consciousness and its borderland — we expiate our sins and work out our salvations.

Here Space and Time themselves are affected by the demands of the profounder world. Simultaneousness of action (notably in the section "Wandering Rocks"),[14] demands disintegration of space: sentences from events elsewhere break through the scene before us; the tap of a blind-man's cane punctuates a discourse that is unaware of it; the bell at an auction-room starts a bicycle-race in another part of the city. Time, however, does not disintegrate; instead, it expands and

[14] The sections of *Ulysses* are identifiable as follows: (Part I); section I, Telemachus and Mentor [Stephen and Mulligan]; section 2, Nestor [Mr. Deasy]; section 3, Proteus [Stephen's thoughts on the beach]; (Part II); section 4, Sirens [Bloom as Ulysses tied to the mast]; section 5, Calypso [Martha Clifford]; section 6, Elpenor [funeral of Patrick Dignam]; section 7, Aeolus [newspaper office]; section 8, the Laestrygonians [the lunchers at Burton's]; section 9, the Lotus Eaters [The Intellectuals at the library]; section 10, Wandering Rocks [all Dublin]; section 11, Scylla, Charybdis, and the Phaeacians [the barmaids and the singers at the Ormond]; section 12, Polyphemus [the "Citizen"]; section 13, Nausikaa [Gerty MacDowell]; section 14, Oxen of the Sun [the medical students at the Holles Street Hospital]; section 15, Hades [night-town]; (Part III); section 16, Eumaeus's hut [Skin the Goat's cabman's shelter]; section 17, Ulysses and Telemachus [Bloom and Stephen]; section 18, Penelope [Mrs. Bloom].

contracts like an accordion, especially when its inhabitants have been drinking. Enormous reveries of apotheosis and martyrdom intervene between question and answer; and again, important events take place without being noticed.

In short, Joyce, having recorded a "slice of life" far more detailed than anything Turgenev or Maupassant ever achieved, and having reached the limit of all "realism" whatsoever, bends his gaze upon his subject so intensely that the gates of the mental world swing open. The magical eye pierces the object. Realism is transcended. The veil of matter is rent and drawn aside and the psychological realm — the stage of the true drama — is revealed.

Again we are baffled at the outset by a swirling chaos, not of the objects this time but of language. Words run together; sentences break off in the midst of a syllable; punctuation tends to disappear. Different styles ebb and flow. The birth of a baby involves a series of imitations of the whole history of English prose. Gertie Macdowell's romance is told in the manner of an Ethel M. Dell novel. A scene in a newspaper office is punctuated with headlines. The party at the hospital works up to Rabelais's *Discourse of the Drinkers;* the scene in night-town takes form as a Strindberg dream-play. When Bloom bores Stephen with his banalities in the next scene, all the clichés in English are revivified; and when Stephen's mental exhaustion becomes complete, the result is a whole section in question-and-answer. And finally, Mrs. Bloom's nocturnal reverie flows on absolutely unhampered by punctuation of any sort.

The style smothers the plot. Suppressed emotions are indistinguishable from the trivialities through which they emerge. For example, we learn, well on through the book, that Blazes Boylan is Mrs. Bloom's lover; then, looking back,

we can trace evidences of Mr. Bloom's emotion. Picking them out and putting them together, the first five read as follows:

(P. 59) Two letters and a card lay on the hall floor. He stooped and gathered them. Mrs. Marion Bloom. His quick heart slowed at once. Bold Hand. Mrs. Marion.

(P. 61) —Who was the letter from? he asked.

Bold hand. Marion.

— O, Boylan, she said. He's bringing the programme.

(P. 89) He's coming in the afternoon. Her songs.

Plasto's. Sir Philip Crampton's memorial fountain bust. Who was he?

— How do you do, Martin Cunningham said, raising his palm to his brow in salute.

— He doesn't see us, Mr. Power said. Yes, he does. How do you do.

— Who? Mr. Dedalus asked.

— Blazes Boylan, Mr. Power said. There he is airing his quiff.

Just that moment I was thinking.

Mr. Dedalus bent across to salute. From the door of the Red Bank the white disc of a straw hat flashed reply: passed.

Mr. Bloom reviewed the nails of his left hand, then those of his right hand. The nails. Yes. Is there anything more in him than they she sees. Fascination. Worst man in Dublin. That keeps him alive. They sometimes feel what a person is. Instinct. But a type like that. My nails. I am just looking at them: well pared. . . .

(P. 164) . . .Who is this was telling me, Isn't Blazes Boylan mixed up in it?

A warm shock of air heat of mustard hauched on Mr. Bloom' heart. He raised his eyes and met the stare of a bilious clock. Two. Pub clock five minutes fast. Time going on. Hands moving. Two. Not yet.

His midriff yearned then upward, sank within him, yearned more longingly.

Wine.

He smellsipped the cordial juice and, bidding his throat strongly to speed it, set his wineglass delicately down.

— Yes, he said. He's the organiser in point of fact.

(P. 174) Mr. Bloom came to Kildare street. First I must. Library.

Straw hat in sunlight. Tan shoes. Turned up trousers. It is. It is.

His heart quopped softly. To the right. Museum. Goddesses. He swerved to the right.

Is it? Almost certain. Won't look. Wine in my face. Why did I? Too heady. Yes, it is. The walk. Not see. Not see. Get on.

Making for the museum gate with long windy strides he lifted his eyes. Handsome building. Sir Thomas Deane designed. Not following me?

Didn't see me perhaps. Light in his eyes.

The flutter of his breath came forth in short sighs. Quick. Cold statues: quiet there. Safe in a minute.

No, didn't see me. After two. Just at the gate.

My heart!

His eyes beating looked steadfastly at cream curves of stone. Sir Thomas Deane was the Greek architecture.

Looked for something.

His hasty hand went quick into a pocket, took out, read unfolded Agendath Netaim. Where did I?

Busy looking for.

He thrust back quickly Agendath.

Afternoon she said.

I am looking for that. Yes, that. Try all pockets. Handker. *Freeman.* Where did I?

Hurry. Walk quietly. Moment more. My heart.

His hand looking for the where did I put found in his hip pocket soap lotion have to call tepid paper stuck. Ah, soap there! Yes. Gate.

Safe!

Boswell was the first, in modern times, to establish that the true hero need not wear nodding tragedy plumes; and that the slightest act of a great man is implicit with his individual greatness. Proust, I believe, worked on some such theory. He concentrates his gaze so intensely upon anything and everything sufficiently trivial—say, a hostess at her tea-table—that

gradually we recognize the Eternal Hostess at an Eternal Tea. She is the Platonic Idea of Hostess-ship; we have been her guest all our lives. It is a trifle terrifying. But Joyce does more. Dimly his solid, four-dimensional figures rear themselves into visualizations of theological concepts — of Good and Evil, of Salvation and Damnation. Meanwhile the plot gets lost in a series of jottings which are impossible to be put together on a first reading, improbable on a second, and unlikely on a third. And when the important events are not described at all, the confusion is still more confounded.

Though Stephen's friendship with Mulligan is one of the main elements of the story, the quarrel which breaks it off is undiscoverable on the page where it should occur (page 406). Those concerned are evidently too drunk to realize what is going on.[15] Another significant episode is also passed over without notice by the chief actor therein: when Bloom gets

[15] As no critic hitherto seems to have mentioned this fight, and as the accounts of it are obscured by slang and decomposed by alcohol, I shall venture to reconstruct it.

At ten minutes past eleven, Mulligan and Stephen are to meet Haines at the Westland Row station (p. 372), where they are to take the train home to Sandycove.

At "Ten to" eleven (p. 404), the party is drinking at Burke's. Near the bottom of p. 405 is heard the warning: "Closing time, gents" and the last round of drinks is ordered (Bloom taking wine—"Rome boose" in Romany—instead of absinthe). At the mention of Bloom's name, Alec Bannon, who came to the party with Mulligan (p. 383), and who has been flirting with the photo-girl, Milly Bloom (pp. 21, 64), suddenly recognizes the father of his inamorata ("Bloo? Cadges ads? Photo's papli, by all that's gorgeous."); immediately he and Mulligan slip away. Stephen misses them at once, and pleads in ludicrous imitation of a begging letter: "Kind Kristyann will yu help, yung man hoose frend tuk bungalo kee to find plais whear to lay crown off his hed 2 night"; for Mulligan has the key to the Martello Tower (p. 22). P. 405 ends with the drinking of the last drink: "Health all. *A la votre!*"

On p. 406 the text gets dizzy, but it is clear that the party remains at Burke's for another paragraph. "Dusty" Rhodes, the man in the mackintosh who attended Dignam's funeral, passes; Bloom bursts into tears at the memories thus revived. There is further talk about the Russo-Japanese war. "Time all. There's

home, he tells his wife that he wants his breakfast in bed, then drops off to sleep. In section 17, which is told from his point of view, the thought never reaches his conscious mind, or expression on paper; but section 18 (her reveries) begins with a reference to it. As Bloom that morning had got Marion's breakfast for her, his change of attitude must have some meaning.

Yet the plot, once unravelled, is simple. It is a study in loneliness. Two carefully contrasted characters (Stephen and Bloom), both desperately unhappy and thoroughly aware of the Hell in which they live, meet at last; but any friendship between them is impossible, because they have nothing in common; and they part again.

Stephen Dedalus, a highly sensitive lad, sustained by a bitter, ingrowing pride, is determined "to discover the mode of life or of art whereby his spirit can express itself with an un-

eleven of them. Get ye gone." indicates the striking of eleven, the closing-hour.

They wander out, chanting Burn's "We're nae the fou"; reciting the test for drunkenness, "The Leith police dismisseth us"; some one is sick; some one is singing "Mona my true love." The fire brigade passes ("Pflaap! Pflaap!" — pp. 406, 413, 469), and all the party but Stephen, Lynch, and Bloom run after it.

Stephen then invites Lynch to go to night-town, and asks "who the sooty hell" is Bloom. Their long legs soon outdistance his flat feet; Bloom pants along after them with a stitch in his side (pp. 413, 429).

It is clear that after the party leaves Burke's at eleven and before the fire-brigade passes (for this incident bridges the intersectional gap) occurs the fight in the Westland Row station (mentioned by Bloom, pp. 429, 575, 576), when Mulligan and Haines, "who eventually euchred their third companion, were patently trying, as if the whole bally station belonged to them, to give Stephen the slip in the confusion." There were evidently blows; at any rate, Stephen hurt his hand somehow (pp. 525, 547, 611); and Bloom later reminds him that "after what occurred at Westland Row station" Mulligan would certainly lock him out of the Tower.

Mulligan and Haines therefore must have caught their train. Bloom also tried to take a train; but he jumped on a train going in the wrong direction (the engine was on the wrong end), and jumped off again (p. 429), in time to overhear Stephen and Lynch making their plans to go to night-town.

fettered freedom."[16] To his ideal he has sacrificed everything: home, church, country.

His father, Simon Dedalus, successively "a medical student, an oarsman, a tenor, an amateur actor, a shouting politician, a small landlord, a small investor, a drinker, a good fellow, a storyteller, somebody's secretary, something in a distillery, a taxgather, a bankrupt, and at present a praiser of his own past,"[17] has proved incapable of supporting the survivors of his fifteen children; on this very day, some of the furniture is being sold at auction. Simon and Stephen despise each other; they share no interests or ambitions; and Stephen simply dismisses his father from his head. He had adored his mother, who babied him even to the extent of washing him;[18] but at her deathbed, his stern loss of faith forbade him to kneel down and pray for her soul when she asked, and the terrible scene still haunts him. Consequently, Stephen has left his father's house, and has hired the Martello Tower at Sandycove, his companion there being the blithe Malachi ("Buck") Mulligan.

The Church has also failed him. As a boy, Stephen had heard his father and his aunt, Mrs. Riordan, quarrel over the Parnell-priest tragedy; during his adolescence, certain sermons on Hell had sunk deep; and at the Jesuit College, he had mastered Aquinas and Aristotle so well that he saw the whole world through their eyes. For a moment he was tempted to become a priest. The pride of being "called," the awful powers put into his hands, the vestments, the secret knowledge of the mysteries of the universe — all these nearly made him

[16] James Joyce: *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, N. Y., 1916, p. 290.

[17] *Portrait*, p. 284.

[18] *Portrait*, p. 203. She died in June; since October he has been unable to perform his own ablutions: *Ulysses*, pp. 15, 404, 625-6.

say "Yes." Then the realization that he would not be a being apart, but the member of an order; that he would everlastingly be a servant; that he would have lost his freedom forever — these cancelled wholly the proud claims of the church and the mystery and power of the priestly office.

He lost his faith; and no compromise was possible. He must believe everything or nothing; he would tolerate no evasions and equivocations and reinterpretations. Fruitlessly his mother argued with him. He broke away, to Paris, only to be called back to her deathbed, where even her dying request could not force him to give in, though only for a moment. He has become what he calls "a horrible example of free thought."

Even so, his pride and his intelligence cannot wholly conquer his training. His mind still runs on obscure problems of theology in which vaguely he senses reflections of his own obscure problems. He frankly prefers Aquinas to Freud; Aquinas and Aristotle still dominate his brain. Phrases from the Vulgate, echoes of liturgy, return to torture him. He can neither serve nor escape.

He has really conquered the weakness of patriotism, however. As an Irishman, he detests English rule; yet he cannot become a Nationalist. The Parnell tragedy led him to the belief that in the end the Irish always sacrifice their patriots and would-be saviors. Like Pierre Glendinning, he has come to the conclusion that no cause is so great that it deserves the sacrifice of his self. He asks instead what Ireland has ever done for him, that it should expect his service.

The effect of all this pent-up energy should be its release in some mighty book. Stephen is known as a poet, but actually he has produced very little as yet. He likes Yeats's poetry, which he used to sing to his mother; and the quatrain he writes

out on a scrap torn from Mr. Deasy's letter while walking along the beach, is conventionally romantic without being trite, and perfectly controlled without being moving or profound. Yet he has also a strong tendency towards realism. After J. J. O'Molloy's samples of perfect (and empty) oratory, Stephen is moved to utter his "vision," *A Pisgah Sight of Palestine* — a vignette of Dublin life, the simplicity of which appeals at first to the pressmen as "copy," but puzzles them by its lack of point. Thus Stephen is poised between the ultra-romanticism of the early Yeats and the ultra-realism of Joyce himself. He has not found himself yet; and only his determination to do so sustains him through the misery of non-production and non-appreciation; he has allowed himself ten years in which to produce something.

He cannot create; neither can he impart. He is not a good teacher, as he knows and as Mr. Deasy hints; and though in this way only can he make any money, he is too proud to let Mr. Deasy's hint pass unnoticed. He determines to give up his job. He cannot even find intellectual equals to converse with, for none has studied Aquinas so well as he. In the *Portrait of the Artist,* he perplexes his Dean with catholic aesthetics; in *Ulysses,* the Irish intellectuals seem quite unable to follow his theory of *Hamlet.* In fact, he can discourse, but he cannot discuss or converse. Any comment is merely interruption to his already ordered thoughts. His nearest approach to genuine conversation lies in his clever and bitter retorts — his "gloomy jesuit jibes," as Mulligan describes them — which usually cause a change of subject.

Love is closed to him. His religious training had separated love from lust with violence to both. Hypersensitive, he "fell" at the age of sixteen; yet a deep asceticism drives him to punish his body by allowing it only the lowest of women

to mitigate its demands. He argues that such women may injure his body but cannot injure his soul. As yet he is too poor to marry, nor has he any inclination that way. Apparently his dead mother still absorbs all his love; her forbidding ghost rises when in a drunken despair he goes to night-town. It seems as though he suffered from that "avarice of emotions" which Aquinas mentions, and which Stephen introduces into his discourse on *Hamlet* (page 197).

There remains friendship; and his incapacity for friendship is outlined in his relations with Malachi Mulligan. Stephen demands everything from a friend, in return for nothing. The *Portrait* ended with his subtle trial of Cranly, and Cranly's failure; and *Ulysses* opens with Stephen's awareness that Mulligan's fondness is also being weighed and found wanting.

Buck Mulligan is perhaps the pleasantest character in the book. Untroubled by life, and completely irresponsible, he ignores his family's dislike of Stephen, and rooms with him at the Martello Tower. He is genuinely fond of Stephen; he admires him profoundly; he believes that, though Stephen will never be a poet, he will produce something in the given ten years. Confident of that, he is quite willing to pay more than his share towards the informally communal purse.

But he cannot (and indeed will not) satisfy Stephen's inordinate egotism. There are limits which his good nature cannot go beyond; there are blind fidelities which his lightheartedness cannot be bothered with. He will not be monopolized. When Stephen expects an apology for a chance remark overheard and construed into insult, Mulligan does not respond. Moreover, he has invited a somewhat fatuous Englishman, Haines, to share the Tower; Stephen is jealous. Stephen is further humiliated by Mulligan's little ways of extracting small coins out of Stephen's pockets: they hint too

clearly at Stephen's inability to bear his full share of the common expenses. Mulligan thinks nothing of such details. Stephen owes him nine pounds; so he borrows Stephen's last pennies for a drink, excusing himself with the announcement, "He who stealeth from the poor, lendeth to the Lord"; and hearing that Stephen is to be paid that morning, he suggests that Stephen turn up at "The Ship" for lunch and provide drinks.

Stephen can never forgive his creditors; but he has other causes for his ranklings. Mulligan is a wit of such brilliance that he completely disintegrates any intellectual conversation. Where Stephen's discourses move from point to premeditated point, Mulligan's improvisations leap irrepressibly from laugh to laugh. He is diverting in both senses of the word. Consequently Stephen privately classes him with Photius and the brood of clowns and mockers; for Mulligan is forever brushing away Stephen's inmost problems with a soothing joke. Therefore Stephen silently determines that he will not sleep at the Tower another night.

So he does not turn up at "The Ship"; instead he sends a telegram: "The sentimentalist is he who would enjoy without incurring the immense debtorship for a thing done. Dedalus."[19] It is his summing up of Mulligan, and in a way a final test; for if Mulligan can see how it applies, there will be depth enough in him to warrant a continuation of their friendship. Mulligan, however, merely laughs at Stephen's "papal bull"; and undeterred from his designs on Stephen's cash, he turns up at the talk on *Hamlet*, in time to interrupt it and virtually ruin Stephen's chance of selling it. Stephen recognizes him as

[19] He is quoting (without acknowledgement) an aphorism from *The Pilgrim's Scrip* (Meredith's *Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, ch. XXIV).

his enemy now, but weakly gives in, and apparently buys the drinks for Mulligan and Haines.

That evening, Stephen is again buying drinks, this time for the medical students at the Holles Street Hospital. Mulligan appears. Mulligan and Haines try to drop him, and there is a scene at Westland Row station. Thus with violence the friendship is broken off; drunken and disgusted, Stephen goes to night-town, in search of a girl he used to know, Georgina Johnson. His only companion is Lynch, a former classmate, now a medical student, who goes with Stephen only because Stephen is paying, and later abandons him when he gets into the row with the soldiers. But Stephen is not to find consolation in lust for the disappointments of friendship.

The cause of Stephen's isolation is one thing — pride. It is his secret and monstrous egotism that attracted him to the priesthood, and then repelled him. Personal pride separates him from his father and his friends, causing him to find insult in the slightest remarks; intellectual pride makes him reject the tenets of his church and refuse to pray for his mother's soul. It is the same egotism in another form that prevents his giving himself either in love or in literature. Family, church, and state represent simply so many bondages to be escaped. He dreams of being free, of flying (like the ancient Dedalus) free of the labyrinth he has constructed and its streets of harlots.

He stands alone, and he does not want to be alone. Kissing goes by favor in this world, and he will not curry favor. The other person must make the first advance, must apologize. He has ruined his soul by striving for its mastery; and he who seeks his own soul shall lose it. Self-excluded from the friendship of men, the love of women, and the expression of himself, none the less he needs intellectually a father, emotionally

a mother, and spiritually a friend. As Telemachus he is seeking such a father — some power or cause before which he can become as a little child, a discipline to which he can devote himself wholly. As Hamlet, he needs a mother, whose understanding love will protect him from the ruder winds of the world. But his search is baffled by the first and deepest of the Seven Deadly Sins: pride. Fundamentally, he is Satan, the Selfhood, warring in vain against the Things that Are, and refusing to strike the banner inscribed *Non Serviam.*[20]

Tagging along on the wild party that night was the despised and comic figure of Mr. Bloom. Nobody particularly noticed him; and when Stephen quarreled with Mulligan and the party broke up, Mr. Bloom was invited neither one way nor the other. But with a loyalty which overcame all fear of rebuff, violence, and scandal, he tracked Stephen into Mrs. Cohen's, took charge of his money, followed him when he ran amok, did his best to get Stephen out of the row with the soldiers, and stood by him when the police arrived. For the timid Mr. Bloom, these acts were supremely courageous.

Leopold Bloom is the complete misfit of all literature. There is something a little askew in him everywhere. Physically he is queer in various ways: for example, he cannot throw a ball like a man, and he never could. His face is pallid; he is flat-footed; his body gives the repulsive effect of being "sinewless and wobbly and all that." He has no head for alcohol; he does not enjoy smoking. Racially he is a mixture, being the son of a Hungarian Jew and an Irish girl.

[20] The identification of Stephen with Satan is made clear by cross-reference. "Theologians consider that Satan's sin was the sin of pride . . . : *non serviam*: *I will not serve*" (*Portrait*, p. 134); at the dramatic climax of *Ulysses*, when Stephen sees his mother's ghost, he cries out: "With me all or not at all! *Non serviam*!" (*Ulysses*, p. 541). Other places (especially *Portrait*, pp. 281, 291), clinch this identification, which is the ultimate clue to Stephen's entire character. It is clinched further by his contrast with Bloom; of which later.

Moreover, his father had become a protestant, and his mother was a catholic. Leopold was brought up as a protestant, turned catholic to get married, then lost all faith in religion, and sought the brotherhood of man in the ranks of the Masons. Religion has never meant anything to him; Darwin had early turned him against orthodoxy; and the world of science came to dominate his imagination. He is fond of reading popular books on astronomy; once he had set out to square the circle; and he is constantly planning little inventions, which never are realized. Needless to say, Irish-Catholic Dublin is not the ideal place for such a Masonic Jew.

He is a patriot, however, and considers himself a true Irishman. In one of the Parnell rumpuses, he overcame his natural cowardice enough to stand beside the harassed chief; and he remembers with pride how Parnell thanked him when he returned Parnell's hat, which had been knocked off. Nevertheless he can be of little service to the Nationalist cause, because nobody accepts him. He is ignored. People don't know he is in the room. He cannot make and keep a friend; whenever he puts himself forward, he talks too much, and bores people with his scientific commonplaces. His little kindnesses are innumerable but unappreciated. He goes to Dignam's funeral; he helps a blind man across the street; he visits the hospital to inquire about Mrs. Purefoy. He feeds stray dogs and scatters buns for the seagulls.

Bloom never has held a job long; just now he is barely getting along as an advertisement solicitor. His inherited frugality was developed by necessity; and the fact that he never stands drinks increases his unpopularity. Yet he is not really stingy: he subscribes for the support of Paddy Dignam's children, he buys a book for his wife, and he pays for Stephen's coffee and rolls at Skin-the-Goat's.

His marriage has turned out badly. He married Marion Tweedy at Gibraltar, daughter of Major Tweedy and a Jewess who was in some unspecified disrepute. Marion appealed to the exotic, oriental side of his nature; especially as he was fond of music, and she sang. They had two children; Millicent, a girl who though she has just reached her fifteenth birthday is already following in her mother's footsteps, and a son, Rudy, who lived only eleven days. The death of Bloom's son affected him profoundly; Bloom had longed (and still longs) for a son with all the fervor of the Jew. Since his son's death, he has not had normal relations with his wife; his inner self perhaps refuses to risk more such tragedies; the consequence has been a slight twist in his mentality. Meanwhile, Mrs. Bloom, who had had her affairs before she met him, and had always been attracted by more virile men, shamelessly has given herself to a succession of lovers. Bloom's humiliation is deep and constant. Everywhere in Dublin he is known as Marion Bloom's husband; people are always asking after her; and at present he is busily avoiding sight or hearsay of Blazes Boylan, her latest — a smart, red-haired lad, who writes popular songs and is planning to take Mrs. Bloom on a concert-tour.

Yet Mr. Bloom really adores his wife. Though at times he vaguely thinks of desertion or divorce, he has dreamed of her the night before; his first alcoholic reverie of love in night-town is of her; he gets her breakfast while she lies in bed; buys her a book and orders her lotion. At the same time, his starved instincts are reaching out in a number of illicit directions: under a false name he is corresponding with a girl he has never seen; his eyes observe women in the streets, statues in the museum, girls on the sea-shore . . . . It is an obviously misfit marriage.

Dublin is Hell to him; he even has vague ideas of running away from it all. Church, state, friendship, marriage, personal achievement are all denied to him. And his humble aspirations and ideals only make the situation worse. His interest in music and science are not enlightened by any genuine taste or intelligence, and find no encouragement. He is desperately lonely.

But when he sees Stephen, he recognizes in him at once his ideal. His frustrate sense of paternity leads him to follow uninvited the person who incarnates all that he could wish his son to be. Stephen is a poet, an intellectual, an aristocrat, a brilliant conversationalist surrounded by admiring friends, one who appreciates ideas and the arts, a person of taste, of brains, of knowledge, unhampered by the drawbacks of race and bad schooling. But the boy has been drinking and has got into unworthy company. Bloom must follow him at all hazards, and look after him; perhaps in him he can find a friend — a son.

Thus Bloom is Ulysses, the wanderer, in search of his home, his wife, his son. But the keynote to his character is not to be found in Homer. For Bloom is the opposite of Stephen; and the opposite of Satan is the Christ — the Christ who constantly sacrifices the selfhood and approaches everything with love and humility, only to be rejected and crucified.[21]

[21] Parallelism with the *Odyssey* reveals Bloom's fundamental significance. In Book IX is the account of Ulysses's adventure with Polyphemus, the one-eyed, pitiless giant. The Ithacans escape from his clutches by getting him drunk and boring out his eye. Ulysses says that his name is Noman, but when he is sailing away, he announces his true name, at which Polyphemus is so enraged that he throws a mountain-top after the ship, but misses it.

This proclamation of his true name is Ulysses's one slip, and the turning-point of the whole epic. For possessed of that real name, the Cyclops is able to inform his father Poseidon who it was that blinded him; and Poseidon's wrath is the cause of Ulysses's subsequent misfortunes.

The corresponding section of Joyce's book is the scene at Barney Kiernan's, where the nameless "citizen" (nameless, not because he is Noman, but because

The contrasts between Stephen and Bloom extend to such small details as that Stephen won't bathe, while Bloom's bath is emphasized. Stephen drinks but scarcely eats throughout the book; Bloom eats, but takes only two drinks on the disastrous party. Stephen is haunted by his mother's ghost, Bloom by his father's. Each has had a dream the night before which he can only half-remember: Bloom's of his wife, Stephen's of an escape from harlots. Both like to discourse at length, but both go unheard, though one has ideas and the other not. Stephen is pointed out wherever he goes; Bloom is always overlooked. One is a poet, the other a scientist in temperament; but the poet is too much of a realist and logician, while the scientist is too much of a romancer;[22] and neither can produce anything which the world has thought worthy its notice. Both are timid of danger, though one can brave a fight to preserve his pride, and the other can take risks

he is Everyman; yet established on p. 337 to be Mr. Giltrap, Gerty Macdowell's maternal grandfather), his single-visioned anti-semitism aggravated by alcohol, heaves an empty biscuit-tin after Bloom (who is driving away, chased by the dog he fed), but misses his aim, being blinded by the sun. The immediate cause for his shot is Bloom's remark: "Christ was a jew like me" . . . the announcing of his true name, if we are to believe that Joyce carried his parallelism so far.

Throughout the scene, Bloom is compared to the Messiah, and we may trace in the episode a vague outline of the Nativity, Ministry, and Passion. "I'll crucify him, so I will," yells the Citizen as he heaves the tin, thus causing the mock-earthquake which accompanies the Crucifixion; and a mock Ascension concludes the section.

Stephen recognizes Bloom as the Christ on pp. 406, 597.

Of course Bloom and Stephen are not the *persons* of Christ and Satan; they are human beings dominated by the moral principles best typified by Christ and Satan; whose theological significances are therefore the keys to the characters of Joyce's agonists.

[22] Bloom is always softening and altering facts in his mind. For example, nothing could be more specific than the Citizen's insults. Yet Bloom tries to persuade himself that "what I said about his God made him wince" (p. 362); by the time he talks it over with Stephen he says: "A soft answer turns away wrath. He hadn't a word to say for himself, as everyone saw" (p. 597); and on p. 612 he is chuckling over the whole affair.

in service of another. Both are poor; but Stephen is a spendthrift with his little; Bloom is very careful of his cash; and neither gets any thanks for it.

The importance of these contrasts, which always meet in the same eventual futility, grows, until they divide the universe between these two figures. Stephen, though naturally an ascetic, is compact of the Seven Deadly Sins. His egotism, or Pride, leads him into a bitter Envy of those more successful than himself; and this Envy bursts forth into a Hatred that causes him to mistake his best friend for an enemy. He is a non-productive victim of Sloth; "count me out," he says, when there is mention of working. Of the two sins of the flesh, we have already commented on his Lust; and just as he had punished his body with the worst of women, so he punishes his Gluttony in the same manner, by refusing his body decent food, but scourging it with absinthe and whiskey. He insults his Avarice in the same manner, by flinging away his month's earnings in a wild party, though he constantly resents his debts. Bloom is the converse of Stephen's vices. He is humble, not self-centered; admiring, not envious; loving, not hating, until he mistakes his enemies for friends. He works hard trying to get advertisements, he eats delicately and drinks very temperately, he is frugal with his money but generous when there is due cause. It is true that he is lustful; but his sins there are chiefly of the imagination; the event usually does not come off.

Stephen is always expiating his own sins; while Bloom is continually expiating the sins and even the misdemeanors of others as well as of himself. For example, Stephen is haunted by his mother's ghost, because they say he killed her; but Bloom is haunted by his father's ghost because his father killed himself out of profound despair.

Both are trying to make themselves better; but any attempt to escape from Hell merely opens another world of torment. "Oh, what a vile and abject thing is man unlesse he raise himselfe above humanity!" Montaigne once remarked (quoting Heraclitus). Stephen and Bloom have both tried it, becoming indeed less vile but also more unhappy. The truly religious temperament of the one, and the truly sceptical temperament of the other both lead to the same unbelief; neither the instinct for religion nor the lack of it brings comfort. To try to break loose from everything proves as futile as the attempt to attach oneself to everything. In marriage or out there is no love; and lust is merely a further torture, though Stephen is sternly self-controlled while Bloom is not. Neither can find the sympathy or friendship he needs: one because he always demands that the other make the first advance, the other because he is always making the first advance himself. Both sense beforehand that each new attempt will fail. The aristocrat in spirit is no more successful than the vulgarian.

Thus the way of Satan and the way of Christ lead alike to futility and despair. Stephen is too selfishly himself to give even the least particle of himself for any cause in any way; Bloom, on the other hand, gives so lavishly of himself to anybody and anything that he loses the respect of others and even of himself. Pride leads to isolation no more inevitably than humility; or hate than love. Consequently both men are excluded from the friendship of man, the love of woman, and self-realization.

There is not much to choose between them, after all, though we may say that Stephen is the more enviable and Bloom the more likable. But we feel very little envy or liking; instead, we are overwhelmed with a profound pity — a pity that is only heightened when we realize that outside a book they

would be unendurable. Joyce has held the scales even between Christ and Satan; he has discovered that neither is the God of This World.

But have Satan and Christ nothing to say to each other when they meet in Hell? Cannot one despair cry to another?

The night-town scene is the dramatic climax of the book, but the heart of the tragedy lies in the conversation of Stephen and Bloom afterwards.

Stephen, knocked out by Private Carr, comes to, lying in the street, with the kindly figure of Mr. Bloom leaning over him. Mr. Bloom helps him up, brushes him off, gives him his hat and stick, and leads him to a cabman's shelter for coffee and a roll. Stephen is sobered by the blow, but his brain is still deadened with alcohol; somewhat dazed, he hears Mr. Bloom talking away at a great rate, giving him advice about wine and women and treacherous friends, asking when he dined last and where he is to sleep, commenting on a passing prostitute and the nature of the soul, pressing undrinkable coffee on him, detailing the persecution of the Jews, patriotism, and so forth. He produces an old photograph of his wife for Stephen's admiration. Seeing that Stephen cannot swallow the coffee and roll, he suggests that they get some cocoa at his house, and on the way he chatters about music, deprecating Wagner but praising Mozart, Meyerbeer, and Flotow. Stephen says that he prefers Elizabethan music; Bloom, never having heard of the names he mentions, says that Mrs. Bloom is passionately fond of music of any kind.

Once in the house, they discuss more such subjects over their cocoa, with little success, as Stephen does not share Bloom's interests or tastes, and talks about more music that Bloom knows nothing of. Bloom suggests that they meet often for further conversation, and arranges for Stephen to

give Mrs. Bloom lessons in Italian. Stephen agrees to do so, but the chances are that he will not; in fact, he is so bored by Bloom's shallow loquacity that he refuses even to sleep a few hours on a cot there.[23]

It is beginning to dawn when he leaves. *Encore un jour.* The two part, neither having suspected the agonies of the other. And Stephen, having broken with his father and his friend, has nowhere to lay his head.

Bloom, left alone, goes to bed; waking his wife, he tells his adventures (some of them), in which the figure of Stephen is the central fact. Evidently he is pleased with his doings, for without thinking he orders his breakfast in bed, quite like a man, and drops off to sleep. The reveries of Mrs. Bloom, as she also drops off, conclude the book.

These reveries are the climax of nastiness in the book, and stamp Marion Bloom as one of the most unpleasant characters in all literature. Her cheap tastes and her illicit loves are paraded at full length. As she unravels the web of that day's weaving, her thoughts wing their ignoble flight through her brain, unchecked by any "censorship," naked of any fantasy, with a frankness which outdoes Swift's *Lady's Dressing Room.*

This section of the book forms, however, the epilogue necessary to complete the study of Hell. Stephen and Bloom have both striven to escape; and one might conclude from their ill success that the best way to live is not to struggle, but to sink back into the mud and take things as they come. For Marion Bloom is the Woman who Does, with apparently none of the inhibitions that torture her husband and Stephen. A miserable vulgarian, she tastes life at the full. She represents all the immodesty of nature, uncurbed by discipline of love or pain.

[23] Bloom admires Stephen and bores him, just as M'Coy admires and bores Bloom (pp. 70-73, 225).

If Stephen is Satan and Bloom is Christ, she is the old Adam (or rather Eve), the flesh unenlightened by any spiritual striving, carnality triumphant, who (in the Greek symbology) is identified with Gaea, the Earth-Mother.

But she, too, is frustrate. Man cannot live by flesh alone, though in Hell it seems to be the all-in-all. Happiness does not lie along the easiest way. Her list of lovers is long because she cannot love any one of them; some hidden ideal always leaves her helplessly unsatisfied and disgusted; a Donna Juanita, she always expects that the next one will be the real person. In Blazes Boylan she has met the perfect male beast, but she is quite ready to drop him in favor of Stephen, sight unseen.

The hidden ideal that torments her is really her husband, after all. Her reveries begin with an emphatic approval of his ordering her to get his breakfast in bed; thereafter, her thoughts turn regularly to him. She likes something in him; she dislikes something else; she is jealous of the women who attract or merely admire him; and so forth. Her peripatetic loves are but the different stanzas of the song to which he is the ever-returning chorus. She is wholly preoccupied with him, although he is not man enough for her.

Thus Satan, Christ, and Eve (or should we say Rahab?)— that is, pride, love, and the flesh — fail alike to find happiness in this world. And the pagan creed fails, as well as the Catholic creed. Homer told of a far-off time when life was clean and clear; when nakedness was nudity; when the laundress was a princess and the wrecked sailor a king; when tragedy was noble and when deep love triumphed at the end. Always man dreams of himself as hero, king, god; and in those primitive times he realized his dream. Then the cycle turned and the dream faded; civilization crept like a disease across the

world. Under shale and shard of reality the dream withdrew; Ithaca and Olympus set below the horizon of Time. In the Hell that has risen around us, the Fact of reality shrieks its No against every assumption of the Truth which is romance. Telemachus will not recognise his father; Ulysses, when he reaches his home, cannot bend the bow; and Penelope has already yielded to a whole series of Antinouses.

Yet —

> Under every grief and pine
> Runs a joy with silken twine.

When Homer's Ulysses was in Hades, he beheld there even the mighty Hercules — "his phantom form, for he himself is with the immortal gods reveling at their feasts, wed to the fair-ankled Hebe, child of great Zeus and golden-sandaled Here."

And Blake, in his analysis of the universe, proclaimed that "what are called vices in the natural world are highest sublimities in the spiritual world,"[24] because "the soul of sweet delight can never be defiled."

Stephen Dedalus himself has some such idea when he muses: "It was revealed to me that those things are good which yet are corrupted which neither if they were supremely good nor unless they were good, could be corrupted."[25]

This Paradise where the heart of good is uncorrupt, and where the Dream remains Truth, is planted too deep in the

[24] Startling as this may sound, it was apparently not too much for Dr. Holmes: "For you may depend upon it, there is not one of these vices that has not a head of its own — an intelligence — a meaning — a certain virtue, I was going to say — but that might, perhaps, sound paradoxical." (*Autocrat*, Boston, 1886, p. 188).

[25] P. 136. Stephen suddenly recollects that the idea came from St. Augustine. It will be found in the *Confessions*, VII, xii (18).

human brain for the light of ordinary day ever to reach it; yet it is there; and it rules our outward lives; for it is the joy actually existing there that makes man unsatisfied with all else, and turns him out, a wanderer across the world. Paradise is the soul of Hell.

Joyce indicates his belief in this Paradise by one or two incidents placed so strikingly that they cannot escape notice.

Stephen, as we have said, adored his mother; his happiest memories are of the times when he sang to her Oona's song from the second act of Yeat's *Countess Cathleen*:

> . . . . And no more turn aside and brood
> Upon Love's bitter mystery . . . .

And at the very moment when Fate is dealing hardest with him: when he is drunk and hungry, without family or friend, driven crazy by the phantom of his mother, and knocked senseless in the street, suddenly to his lips come fragments of the song; and we know that the real Stephen is among the deathless gods, singing to the mother from whom he has never been parted.[26]

At this same moment, Mr. Bloom, standing over Stephen's body, mumbling the Masonic oath of brotherhood, sees the vision of his son. Had Bloom been less in the outer world at that moment, the son would have recognized him.

And Marion Bloom, too, has her center where romance is undefiled. Even as the vulgarian Mrs. George, in Shaw's *Getting Married*, sinks into a trance and reveals the heart of her feverish liaisons to be pure ecstasy, so Mrs. Bloom at last sinks to sleep and returns to the real motive of her existence:

[26] As though to emphasize the triumph of Dream over Fact, Joyce, himself an ultra-Realist, has chosen a song by Yeats, who in those years was the ultra-Romanticist.

her love for her husband. As her miserable thoughts trail off into silence, the air suddenly grows brighter with the scent of flowers; birds are flying and music is playing; she is back at Gibraltar; and Leopold is calling her a flower of the mountain, and kissing her, ". . . . and yes I said Yes I will Yes." This "Yes" is the first as well as the last word in her section of the book; it punctuates her reveries meaninglessly at first; but now, as she drifts into the deeper world, its significance becomes plain.

> Truly, My Satan, thou art but a Dunce,
> And dost not know the Garment from the Man.
> Every Harlot was a Virgin once,
> Nor can'st thou ever change Kate into Nan.

And this "Yes," with which the book ends, is the affirmation of eternal Paradise of Dream against the "No" of the temporal Hell which is this world.

S. Foster Damon

RABBITS

THERE was a strong wind blowing and it caked the ground under the tulip stalks. Made it hard and dry and bleached the top crust. Blew the fallen tulip petals this way and that, crumpled and faded. The beds had done well this year. Pink petals and lavender, petals carmine and maroon had been held high by sturdy stems, opening wide in the morning and closing together into tight little cones at evening. Day by day he had watched them. Now they had scattered like birds from a nest. In a few days they would be nothing but colorless shreds, drying and curling up in the wind and the sun. When the stalks began to die down he would jerk them away from their bulbs and plant something else in the bed. Last year there had been petunias.

He took up a handful of earth and sifted it between his fingers. Some of the powdery dust blew up into his face and settled in the small beads of perspiration which the wind had not dried. It was a hot afternoon, and the wind was hot, too. Sultry. He crumbled another handful and smoothed it down with the back of a trowel. When he had loosened all the soil in the bed he would give it a good watering. This would lay the dust and bring back that rich, brown color he liked. He would water it two or three times and fool this idiotic wind. Everything looked so tired today.

The bleeding-hearts were dancing a crazy jig like so many puppets in a marionette show. Bleeding-hearts! What did they know about hearts that bleed, bobbing about in the breeze over there near the privet hedge, waiting for the cool and quiet of nightfall? He got up to stretch his legs and tuck in

the old shirt which was edging itself out of his trousers. The wind was stronger and it blew the ashes out of his pipe.

Hello! Cut worms. One of the seedling asters he had planted the week before was lying flat. He picked it up and threw it into the basket he had for weeds and stones. Digging down near the roots he found the murderer, fat and juicy, rolled into a satiated ball. He laid him in the palm of his hand and looked at him. Despoiler of beauty. No, he wouldn't put him down on the walk and step on him. Not a chance. It was the sort of thing that made him cringe. Over the hedge with him. Over into the Harris's driveway. He could never get back to the asters. An automobile was sure to finish him. A catbird flew around the corner of the house and lit on a branch of mountain-laurel. Might have liked the cutworm. Too late now. Probably preferred daintier morsels, sitting there so slim and sleek. Thirsty at any rate. The catbird had flown over to the bird-bath and was leaning over to drink. Was showing the little patch of red beneath his tail. Queer to have the only spot of color where you couldn't see it.

The bed was weeded now and the earth broken up so that the water could get in and seep down to the roots. It needed more fertilizer. Next Spring he would get a load of manure and enrich this poverty-stricken, clayey substance, so full of potential life a month or two before. But what could you expect of May, with no rain for days and a hot wind blowing? May was a disappointing month. It had neither the crisp promise of April nor the prodigal fulfillment of June. The watering-can was in the barn and he started down to get it. That cluster of white rhododendron was too heavy, sagging with the weight of its own luxuriance. He clipped it close to the trunk and laid it back on the grass. Later on, he would take it in to Helen. He leaned down to scratch up the ground

a little with the point of his pruning-shears, but stopped before he had finished.

"Poor little fellow, what's happened to you?"

The chestnut-colored body of a young rabbit was lying there under the rhododendron. He knew that it had not been dead more than a day or two. Maybe not that long. The fur was clean and smooth and had lost none of its lustre. The hind legs seemed to have shrunk a little but the head and ears looked firm. Had death come peacefully there under the rhododendron or with some vitiating torture? Who could say?

He got a shovelful of dirt but waited a minute before he threw it on. It seemed a pity to turn the little animal into fertilizer. It probably hadn't had more than four or five weeks of life. It didn't seem to be doing any harm, just lying there. If the maggots had begun their work of purification they were starting on the under side. Nothing marred the soft ripple of fur. It seemed to invite the caress of his earth-stained fingers, not the brutal annihilation accomplished by that simple turn of the wrist.

Oh, yes, he had started for the watering-can. He kept it down in the barn under the sink. It had a leak around the spout, but he would rather sprinkle the flower-beds any day than eat. He liked to see the blossoms and the leaves sparkle as the drops fell on them. To watch the water coursing down the stems until it reached the soil. It would be more fun than usual today since it was so hot and dry. The prospect of a shower never deterred him from watering. He regarded it as a benediction which, after a day in the garden, always took precedence over putting away the tools. Filling the can, he started back to the beds.

What, a second rabbit? Or had he been trying to bury the other one alive? Sitting on a pile of weeds in the path was a

round ball of fur as much like the first as two peas in a pod. He looked under the rhododendron as he went by, but the mound of earth was undisturbed. His conscience was clear. Could the rabbit, perched there so quietly on his weedy throne, be hunting for a little lost brother? How pleasant it was to see him sitting there without a fear in the world. That's what comes of being so young. A full-grown rabbit would have scampered off quick as lightning, as if all men were enemies.

A bad thing for gardens, rabbits. They ate everything that tasted good. Harris was always cursing them. Said he'd get rid of them some way. He remembered how pathetic the crocusses had looked, all nibbled off at the top, sticking straight up in the air. Lucky he didn't have any vegetables. Rabbits were more selective in the matter of flowers and didn't do so much damage. Young rabbits were nice. They weren't afraid of people and their appetites were small. This little fellow could stay as long as he liked. Look at him sitting over there, all hunched up, so comfortable and sleepy.

The last drop of water dripped out of the spout and he started back to the barn to refill the can.

"Bunny, bunny," he whispered as he went by, "how do you happen to be sitting still all this time?"

He put down the can and went a few steps nearer as the rabbit acknowledged his greeting with a lazy blink.

"It's not becoming of you to show so little animation."

He leaned over and rubbed his fingers together in what he thought was a coaxing gesture. The rabbit did nothing more than turn his head to one side. Then he picked up his rake and smoothed the little back with the end of the handle. Still no effect. Persistent, he put it under the stomach and raised it a little. Then with a few feeble hops the rabbit left the

pile of weeds and went to the edge of the fern bed to continue his doze undisturbed. Strange actions for those usually so timorous. Evidently something was wrong. There might be two dead rabbits before the shower broke.

He went on with his work, glancing from time to time in the rabbit's direction to see if he had thrown off his lethargy. But the only movement was a slight nodding of the head in an attempt to frighten away the large iridescent fly that had come out of the air to annoy him. The fly had scented death and set about worrying his quarry.

This was distressing. He couldn't go into dinner with the thought of this resigned suffering right under the window. Why hadn't the rabbit elected to die in Harris's yard? Or in shady privacy under one of the rhododendrons where no one could see him? There he was right out in plain sight at the edge of the fern bed, nodding away. Clapping his hands he made a series of noises like someone trying to scare a cat, but the rabbit wouldn't move. He must be pretty far gone. Something must be done. You couldn't cover up a dead thing with a shovelful of dirt right out in the front of a bed. In the morning he would have to be moved.

The fly had been joined by two others and all three had lighted on the rabbit's nose, paying no attention to his feeble efforts to shake them off. Oh, this was terrible! He couldn't stay there watching the little animal get weaker and weaker. Yet he couldn't resist the morbid temptation of turning his head from time to time for another look when he tried to work facing the other direction. He remembered how people drowned mice by putting them in a pail of water. Possibly that would be a good idea. The watering-can. If he just picked up the rabbit by the ears and dropped him in, he could go away for a few seconds until the drowning was over. No,

he wouldn't pick the rabbit up by the ears, and feel him squirming and wriggling. He couldn't. He might get him up on the shovel and tip him into the can. Would that work? He might jump or slip off or the sharp edge of the shovel might cut him. No, it wasn't a good idea after all.

The shovel. That was better. One quick blow and it would all be over, and he wouldn't ever have to see that soft little body drenched and dripping. Wouldn't ever have to turn it out of the watering-can into some bushy, hidden place. A lateral blow from the heavy shovel would send the frail little bundle of fur way back into the bed under the taller ferns and he would never have to look at it. He could stand in front of the rabbit so that the impact would come on the head and there would be no pain for more than a second. He could swing the shovel sideways in his right hand and look off in another direction.

No, he was damned if he would kill a little rabbit. Take a big shovel, whack him on the head, send him flying. He would die anyway within a few hours. Better to let things take their course. Probably he was in a state of coma and wasn't suffering at all. Fish were coldblooded and didn't suffer, someone had told him. Maybe animals didn't know pain either, although he knew he had often seen it in their eyes. The prodigality of nature! Millions of little rabbits must at that very minute be lying huddled together in subterranean maternity wards biding their time to come up into the light and raise the devil with somebody's vegetables. Why make all this fuss about one casualty? Two casualties. He remembered how neatly he had covered the little brown pile under the rhododendron. It was certainly a coincidence. Not so strange if there had been one dead rabbit. But two.

Not dead yet. There he was stock still, with the flies buzzing

around him and the wind madly blowing the fern leaves at the back of the bed. A pitiful, cowed object crouching on the ground waiting for death. And a man, towering above him, watering the flower-beds, not brave enough to put a small animal out of his misery. A man right enough, but still the little boy who ran away to hide when his father was killing a chicken for Sunday dinner.

With a fury he picked up the shovel. He was perspiring like a man coming out of a faint. His nausea was akin to seasickness. He took a few steps forward and swung the shovel with all his might. With strength enough to kill a mad dog. Why hadn't he looked at what he was doing? Why had he looked away when his aim had to be exact? He might have known it would be this way. The shovel had struck the ground and had not touched the rabbit until the rebound. It had hit him on the side and sent him only about a foot away. His body was under a fern leaf that hung over until it almost touched the ground.

Great God! What a clumsy cow he was! A well-directed blow on the head would have done the trick. He had messed the thing up completely. There was no sign of movement under the fern leaf, but how did he know he had killed the rabbit? He might be breathing still. Should he raise the leaf and try to see? No, that was the thing he had planned to avoid all along. A shovelful of dirt would put the hated object out of sight forever. But the slow stifling of an animal that was sick, and now maimed by his own hand, would be the supreme act of cruelty. He nerved himself for the only alternative and brought the flat side of the shovel down on the fern leaf as one would swat a fly with a newspaper. Mechanically, he threw on a heaping shovel of dirt and then with twitching fingers drew the leaf out from under. The stem was

mashed and bent but not broken. The crumpled fronds spread like a weeping-willow close over the mound. No one would have guessed that it was there. Much less what it contained.

A few drops of rain had fallen and the sky was growing dark. The wind felt chilly and thunder rumbled in the distance as he walked up the side path that led to the front steps. There would be a heavy shower. The weeds he had pulled lay in a wilted, disorderly heap near the fern bed. A few feet away was the basket he had brought out to put them in. His pruning-shears lay open on the edge of a grass border. The spray of rhododendron had blown out into the driveway and the empty watering-can had fallen onto its side. His tools were scattered all around the garden. He had never left them out before.

Helen was putting some wild azalea into a vase on the hall table when he opened the door.

"Had a good time?" she asked.

His reply was noncommittal.

"Mr. Harris told me he couldn't grow a thing in his garden," she went on, "on account of the rabbits eating everything up. He said he had put out some poison for them."

"Really?"

"Yes. It's a funny thing to do, isn't it? I don't see what makes them eat it."

"Neither do I," he said, starting upstairs. "Is there enough hot water for a bath?"

DALE WARREN

ACADEMIC DISCOURSE AT HAVANA

I

CANARIES in the morning, orchestras
In the afternoon, balloons at night. That is
A difference, at least, from nightingales,
Jehovah and the great sea-worm. The air
Is not so elemental nor the earth
So near.
But the sustenance of the wilderness
Does not sustain us in the metropoles.

II

Life is an old casino in a park.
The bills of the swans are flat upon the ground.
A most desolate wind has chilled Rouge-Fatima
And a grand decadence settles down like cold.

III

The swans . . Before the bills of the swans fell flat
Upon the ground, and before the chronicle
Of affected homage foxed so many books,
They warded the blank waters of the lakes
And island canopies which were entailed
To that casino. Long before the rain
Swept through its boarded windows and the leaves
Filled its encrusted fountains, they arrayed

The twilights of the mythy goober khan.
The centuries of excellence to be
Rose out of promise and became the sooth
Of trombones floating in the trees.
The toil
Of thought evolved a peace eccentric to
The eye and tinkling to the ear. Gruff drums
Could beat, yet not alarm the populace.
The indolent progressions of the swans
Made earth come right; a peanut parody
For peanut people.
And serener myth
Conceiving from its perfect plenitude,
Lusty as June, more fruitful than the weeks
Of ripest summer, always lingering
To touch again the hottest bloom, to strike
Once more the longest resonance, to cap
The clearest woman with apt weed, to mount
The thickest man on thickest stallion-back,
This urgent, competent, serener myth
Passed like a circus.
Politic man ordained
Imagination as the fateful sin.
Grandmother and her basketful of pears
Must be the crux for our compendia.
That's world enough, and more, if one includes
Her daughters to the peached and ivory wench
For whom the towers are built. The burgher's breast,
And not a delicate ether star-impaled,
Must be the place for prodigy, unless
Prodigious things are tricks. The world is not
The bauble of the sleepless nor a word

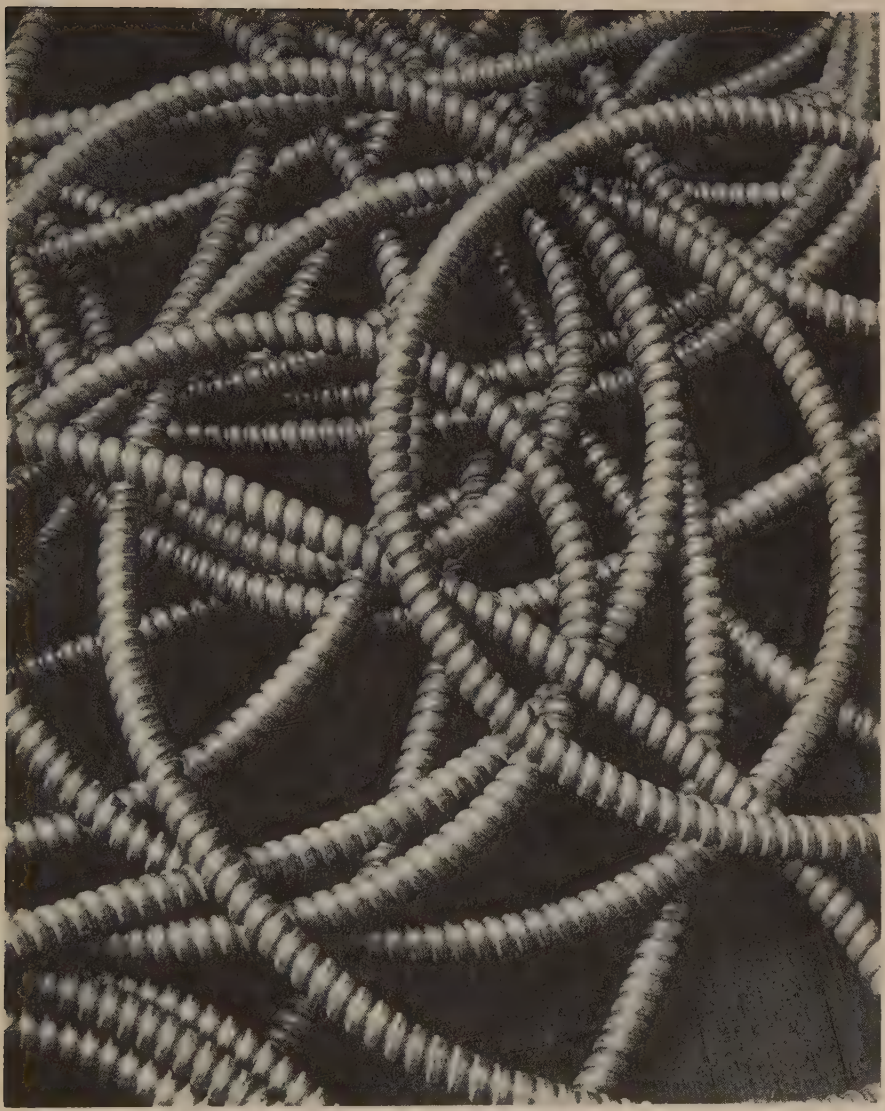
That should import a universal pith
To Cuba. Jot these milky matters down.
They nourish Jupiters. Their casual pap
Will drop like sweetness in the empty nights
When too great rhapsody is left annulled
And liquorish prayer provokes new sweats: so, so:
Life is an old casino in a wood.

IV

Is the function of the poet here mere sound,
Subtler than the ornatest prophecy,
To stuff the ear? It causes him to make
His infinite repetition and alloys
Of pick of ebon, pick of halcyon.
It weights him with nice logic for the prim.
As part of nature he is part of us.
His rarities are ours: may they be fit
And reconcile us to our selves in those
True reconcilings, dark, pacific words,
And the adroiter harmonies of their fall.
Close the cantina. Hood the chandelier.
The moonlight is not yellow but a white
That silences the ever-faithful town.
How pale and how possessed a night it is,
How full of exhalations of the sea . . .
All this is older than its oldest hymn,
Has no more meaning than tomorrow's bread.
But let the poet on his balcony
Speak and the sleepers in their sleep shall move,
Waken, and watch the moonlight on their floors.
This may be benediction, sepulcher,
And epitaph. It may, however, be

An incantation that the moon defines
By mere example opulently clear.
And the old casino likewise may define
An infinite incantation of our selves
In the grand decadence of the perished swans.

WALLACE STEVENS



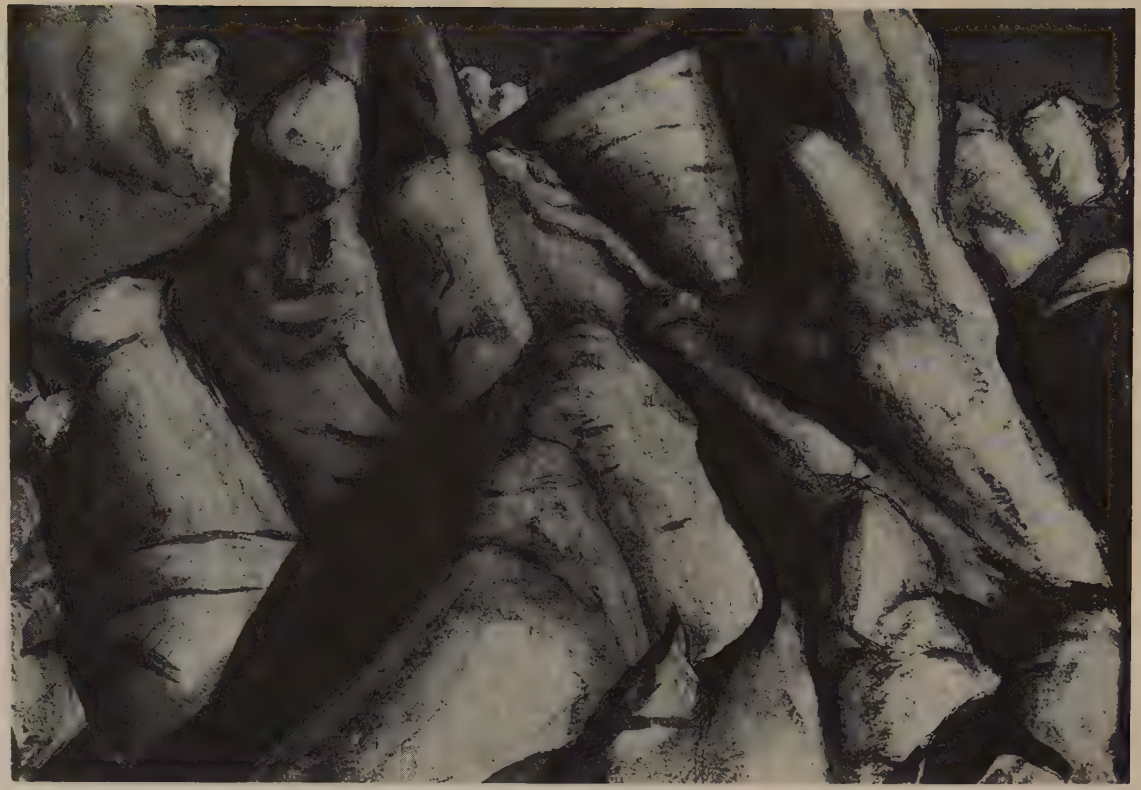
Photograph

Ralph Steiner

Photograph

Ralph Steiner

Wooden Cat — Duncan Fergusson



Montserrat

Edward Forbes

THE INDIVIDUALISM OF IRVING BABBITT

I

ONE of the most vigorous thinkers of our time is Irving Babbitt. An historian of ideas, a psychologist, and a moralist, he has developed a philosophy of an inspired common sense, a reasoned plea for us to be "moderate, sensible, and decent." His books are marked by an underlying fervor of conviction, and an extraordinary consistency of doctrine. The humanistic attitude advocated in his first book he holds unaltered, but it has advanced in the course of his argument from the tentativeness of a diagnosis to the certainty of a successful operation. Though he seems always to be preaching the same thing, he seldom repeats himself. Buttressed by an enormous erudition his principles have become more definite in meaning and broader in application. He has ranged through many literatures, Oriental as well as Occidental, to collate the standards for a sound individualism. And he has analyzed the philosophies, the religions, and the arts of an unsound individualism. All sects and creeds that deviate from the human and religious norm, and prove fruitless in life, be they as different as dilettantes and philologists, humanitarians and imperialists, mystics and rationalists, he joins together and brands with the name romanticism. Mr. Babbitt is the militant guardian of traditional wisdom; and romanticism, which is his substitute for hell, includes all who have fallen into error.

With scientific exactitude[1] he has sought to establish the relations between romantic theory and practice, as betrayed in character, literature, and history. He believes that the person who violates the human law will be unhappy as inevitably as the child who thrusts his finger into the fire will be burnt. Consequently he exhibits the whole sequence of romantic psychology with judicial precision. He demonstrates that the romantic view of original genius, the playboy of his temperament, leads to the romantic theory of the imagination. The romantic imagination, arching like a rainbow over the experience of evil, of incompatible ideals and recalcitrant forces, then projects its desires for human brotherhood. It fashions an Arcadia where all men follow the impulses of each vagrant mood and live in sympathy. Instead of brotherly love, what actually results from the emancipation of temperament is "the lust of sensation and the lust of power, the Bohemian and the superman." The romanticist disillusioned by the refusal of reality to corroborate his dreams, then repudiates his daylight personality and, ironically withdrawing into his transcendental ego, pelts common sense with his paradoxes. If he descends from his invisible retreat and seeks solace in communion with nature he finds his solitude and melancholy there too.

This analysis of the psychology of unhappiness owes its cogency to Mr. Babbitt's cumulative disposal of his evidence and his scent for the coördinating idea. The discussion of romantic love, for example, included references to Rousseau, Shelley, and Wagner, only, the reader might well combat Mr. Babbitt's judgment. But when he further documents his case with mention of the myth of Pygmalion, the quest of the blue flower, the romantic re-interpretation of the Don Juan legend, mediaeval chivalry, Cervantes, Petrarch, Ruskin,

[1] *The New Laokoön*, pp. 201-202.

Hazlitt, Poe, Baudelaire, Chateaubriand, Novalis, Musset and George Sand, emotional memory and the differences between Wordsworth's and Aristotle's poetics, the reader must capitulate.

Of the many contrasts Mr. Babbitt draws between romanticism and classicism, the central one is that between the wonderful and the probable.[2] He occasionally associates the wonderful with novelty and "Love's sweetest part, Variety," with those occurrences customarily referred to as exceptional, strange, or unique. But in the main he intends to designate by the wonderful any imaginative synthesis of life which has been proved illusory when analyzed by the evidence of experience. The wonderful in this sense, far from claiming the diversity of life, belongs to imagination's specious unities. Opposed to the wonderful, as truth to falsehood, is the probable. The probable discussed by Mr. Babbitt bears no relation to the probability discussed by logicians and philosophers. The probable to him is the normal[3] "the total symmetry of life apprehended intuitively with the aid of the imagination." It is the unity to which human nature can validly aspire, attested by history and supported by reason. From history and through reason he has hoped to define the probable.[4] His definitions, consequently, do not contain the essence of terms but epitomize their classical meaning which he tacitly accepts as true. "Far be it from me," he writes, "to attempt any abstract definition of beauty. This, to judge from the vast majority of works on aesthetics, is a temptation of the enemy. But we may draw certain interesting conclusions if we study what men have actually meant at different epochs when they

[2] *The New Laokoön*, p. 72.

[3] *Rousseau and Romanticism*, pp. 54, 107, 201, 219.

[4] *Rousseau and Romanticism*, pp. 1, 15.

spoke of a thing as beautiful; if we note the curious way in which the word beauty has been warped to make it conform to the half truth that happened to be in vogue at any particular time."[5] Without a conception of the probable, derived from the classical meaning of terms, his analysis of romanticism is no more possible than *Les Caractères* of La Bruyère without the French seventeenth-century fusion of Christianity, paganism, and taste. Mr. Babbitt's sympathies rightly are French; he is an *honnête homme* born out of season, forced by the exigencies of academic life and an unfavorable intellectual atmosphere to the production of books designed more for the classroom than for the library. Where La Bruyère is a companion who characterizes people and customs, Irving Babbitt is a guide who characterizes ideas.

So his message is not new. It is an amalgam of all orthodoxies. He has annexed them as they afforded him a vocabulary, a methodology, and a discipline, without accepting their dogmas, and often without committing himself as to their literal truth. Confucianism, Buddhism, Christianity, and the paganism of Plato and Aristotle are all domiciled together as spiritual brethren in the house of humanism. He would say with Joubert "Il faut opposer aux idées libérales les idées morales de tous les temps." Joubert found those ideas in Christianity and held a point of view which was a personal reflection of the purest Augustinian metaphysics. Mr. Babbitt embraces all traditions and holds no point of view personally his own. His unwillingness to father any single tradition or to identify himself with any recent movement makes his system seem austere and negative.

Isolation is the price of detachment, and what Mr. Babbitt has gained in historical perspective and psychological analysis we have lost by his withdrawal into his watch tower. His

[5] *The New Laokoön*, pp. 217-218.

main interest is in the individual, but he has conceived of the individual universally as a sort of man in general whose task in life is to work out standards in general. The individual, once he is plucked from his context of daily life, is not confronted with particular problems. He is neither statesman, nor painter, nor embarrassed lover, compelled to face some immediate aspect of experience, but simply man, who has broken with past authority and is seeking to supplant it experimentally. The dramatist for instance is interested in the history of the drama as he can bring it to bear on his problems. He wants precepts imbedded in practice, not principles alone.[6] Man in general abstracted from his environment has no such problems, and there will be no need to supply him with a tradition and a public. His only need will be that of a sound psychology and a general end. A disciplined imagination, a restraining will, and a mind carefully analytic of general ideas harmoniously working for happiness will satisfy the demands of man in general.

The traditions which Mr. Babbitt canvasses for his individual are repositories of varying psychologies and varying imaginative syntheses of life. His canvass of these traditions is empirical, inductive, and from the point of view of the psychologist and the historian of ideas. The psychologist as distinct from the biographer is not interested in the totality of any individual, but in those composite elements which establish the type. To him the individual is a trait, an example, a case, to be analyzed in abstraction from all the adventitious

[6] *Molière, La Critique de L'Ecole de Femmes:* "Vous êtes de plaisantes gens avec vos règles," exclaims Dorante, "dont vous embarrassez les ignorants et nous étourdissez tous les jours. Il semble, à vous ouir parler, que ces règles de l'art soient les plus grands mystères du monde; et cependant ce ne sont que quelques observations aisées, que le bon sens a faites sur ce qui peut ôter le plaisir que l'on prend à ces sortes de poèmes, et le même bon sens qui a fait autrefois ces observations les fait aisément tous les jours sans le secours d'Horace et d'Aristotée."

expressions of his personality. To the historian of ideas the individual is merely a witness, and it is indifferent to his testimony whether he be a Shelley, a Bergson, or a Ninon de Lenclos. Both the psychologist and the historian of ideas handle the individual scientifically as evidence which is valuable not in itself, but as illustrating some law of behavior, and some development of a theory. For this reason Mr. Babbitt seldom attempts balanced estimates of individuals and ignores the technical and aesthetic values of art.[7] His purpose is to equip man in general with sound abstract standards. With their aid man is prepared to seek happiness.

Happiness is the goal which Mr. Babbitt proposes. He has attacked romanticism because it failed to make for happiness, and he has advocated humanism and religion because they seemed requisite for its attainment. Humanism is the way of the world. Through harmonized desires it aims simply at secular satisfactions. It rests on the affirmation of a special activity, a special way of life, eligible to man alone, who achieves happiness by the exercise and observance of this activity. But independent as humanism is of religion in many ways, in one primary element he considers it dependent. That element is a transcendent "ethical will" the *frein vital*.[8] "The honest thinker, whatever his own preference, must begin by admitting that though religion can get along without humanism, humanism cannot get along without religion." Unknowable in its nature like electricity,[9] irreducible to rational formulation since it is higher than reason, beyond the scope of science and the competency of philosophy, outside of space and time, the will to Mr. Babbitt is an object of direct per-

[7] Of interest is the following remark: "Art rests primarily not on ethical but aesthetic perception." — *Rousseau and Romanticism*, p. 203.

[8] *Rousseau and Romanticism*, p. 380.

[9] *Masters of Modern French Criticism*, pp. 231, 247, 281.

ception, like a color, the essence of our humanity and superior to it. The Orient first realized its importance and in Buddhism the modes of its action were described in psychological terms, devoid of metaphysics and the dogmas of theology. The Greeks recognized it, but in their feast of reason they assigned it a secondary place. After the surfeit and collapse of Greek rationalism Christianity recovered it, and in the doctrine of grace the will became "the keystone of civilization." The moderns with their repudiation of Christian dogma lost sight of it. Under the regime of naturalism man acquired control over nature and lost mastery of himself. He has warred against other expanding individuals and inwardly lost peace. Only by rising above naturalism and subjecting the desires to the will, a principle of pause, restraint, and selection, can man become happy.

The will which humanism employs to secure worldly happiness is the inspiration of religion.[10] Religion to Mr. Babbitt is otherworldly, it constrains and finally extinguishes the desires. The end of religion is not mediation but meditation, not the *honnête homme* but the saint. As La Bruyère puts it, and here one can note the difference of temper between him and Mr. Babbitt, "Il y a deux mondes: l'un où l'on séjourne peu, et dont l'on doit sortir pour n'y plus rentrer; l'autre où l'on doit bientôt entrer pour n'en jamais sortir; la faveur, l'autorité, les amis, la haute réputation, les grands biens, servent pour le premier monde; le mépris de toutes ces choses sert pour le second, il s'agit de choisir."

From his point of view Mr. Babbitt's doctrine is consistent and complete. Man in general has been guarded against fallacious ideas and harmful actions. After the compendious exploration of romantic theory and psychology he has no cause

[10] *Rousseau and Romanticism*, pp. 22, 222, 252. *Democracy and Leadership*, pp. 6, 195.

to stumble into unhappiness. Instead he is on the road to happiness either as a humanist or as a religious man. If he is a humanist it is immaterial what vocation he follows; for the humanism of Irving Babbitt is not so much a subject matter, or a system of ideals, as a way of life. Man in general may particularize himself impartially as a merchant, statesman, or artist; what matters is the quality of will he displays, the universal he may body forth in his mode of life. If his mode of life is religious he will face an infinite series of increasingly delicate inner adjustments, a constant discipline, and a final mystic intuition transcending reason. In this ultimate[11] "genuine spiritual enthusiasm, the inner light, and the inner check are practically identical."

So to take the term humanism, as T. S. Eliot does in his "The Humanism of Irving Babbitt,"[12] arbitrarily limit its application, and then conclude that one has disposed of Mr. Babbitt's humanism, or precluded its possibilities is a pure misconception, or else untoward flippancy. And to state that "Mr. Babbitt makes it very clear, here and there throughout the book, that he is unable to take the religious view — that is to say he cannot accept any dogma or revelation; and that humanism is the *alternative* to religion," shows a double misconception. For first he does not regard humanism as an alternative or substitute for religion, but clearly makes it dependent upon religion. And secondly he does not mean by religion, dogma and revelation, but insight into the will and the inner life. It is possible to question the efficacy of a religion uncompounded of dogma and revelation, but if Mr. Eliot who is a master at literalness had meant to challenge Mr. Babbitt's conception of religion he would no doubt have done so explicitly. Mr. Babbitt prefers humanism to religion be-

[11] *Rousseau and Romanticism*, pp. 258. *The New Laokoön*, pp. 92-93.

[12] T. S. Eliot, *For Lancelot Andrewes*, p. 128.

cause it is more accessible to the mass of men, it being far easier to be human than to be superhuman. But in his ultimate evaluations and sympathies he favors religion. He believes that "the final reply to all the doubts that torment the human heart is not some theory of conduct, however perfect, but the man of character" and the man of greatest character to him is the saint.[13]

II

If I have argued against Mr. Eliot's interpretation of Mr. Babbitt, it is not to defend Mr. Babbitt — he requires no defense — but to rehearse the cardinal points of his doctrine, correlate his conclusions with his problems and interests, and thus to account for his omissions in terms of his system. In this way criticism can determine whether agreement with his analysis of romanticism necessitates acceptance of his more positive program. Mr. Babbitt's inquiry was partly into the possibility of standards, the criteria of their validity, and partly into their general nature. His method, aiming as it does at the general, fastens on tendencies, movements, and laws, and by its nature impelled him to dissociate himself from the traditions of the past, and to assume an attitude of detachment from the present. Hence his individualism is critical in the exact Kantian sense. It is meant more to rectify our knowledge and purge it of errors than to extend it to a deeper understanding of human nature. His individualism supplies the abstract categories of right reason, right will, and right imagination, which serves as prolegomena to any sound individualism, and which it is the business of criticism to make concrete. If Rousseau gave the wrong answers to the right questions, then Mr. Babbitt has restated the questions, excluded for his readers the false answers, and indicated the general conditions for their solution.

[13] Perhaps the essential difficulty is that Mr. Eliot, who is an Anglican, cannot conceive Mr. Babbitt's notion of religion to be religion at all.

But if one asks what it is that Mr. Babbitt values, what apart from refuting the ever recurrent expressions of romanticism he would have man do, the answer is hard to find. Aristotle would have man achieve his complete nature, and the sum of Aristotle's writings show in practice what he meant by the exercise of reason. And Santayana has described The Life of Reason, of that part of our experience which perceives and pursues ideals — all conduct as controlled and all sense so interpreted as to perfect natural happiness. Perhaps the romance of reason, its poetry and ideal harmonies, has intoxicated Santayana overmuch; like the romancer he has quietly floated his story beyond the limits of probable experience, and dwells too exclusively on that happy constellation of essences where human nature expresses itself in the pursuit of liberal ends, society, art, religion, and science, forgetful of the fact that material conditions may no longer permit their free realization, and so rapt in contemplation that no effort is made to bring them into existence. If *The Life of Reason* suggests a sanctuary from an uncongenial world in a remote and inaccessible empyrean which Santayana disdains to consider in relation to a thing so accidental, plebian, and transient as existence, he has at least patiently displayed the goods of his empyrean. Nobody can accuse Mr. Babbitt of neglecting the world. Rather he takes it too seriously; not however, in the everyday immediacy with which it confronts the laborer, but in that intermediate region of ideas which points to practice and yet lacks both the breadth of disinterested speculation and the utility of specific policy. With Aristotle he declares the end to be the chief thing of all. His excursions into the ideal have assured him that the ideal is no myth. But he has not wooed the ideal for itself, as the saint seeks God, and the sensualist pleasure. Value accrues to the ideal by reason of possible possession and enjoyment, but like

the Puritan he at heart distrusts happiness, and like the business man he has no time for it. He has made a *mariage de convenance* with the ideal and has spent its dowry of knowledge upon the unbalanced ledger of the world. Santayana has traversed the Life of Reason, Mr. Babbitt the Life of Unreason; neither has regarded the individual in the context of the particular conditions which he must overcome to fulfill his purpose.

Yet the notion of will insisted on by Mr. Babbitt as of first importance contains the seeds of a more fruitful individualism. In his doctrine, it is true, the will is scantily described and verbally confused with incongruous issues. If the will is directly revealed to us by perception, like a color, then manifestly perception can tell us nothing of its status in nature, and it is illegitimate to conclude from perception that the will is transcendent and higher than reason. Perception simply discloses its object; perspectives of history, science and philosophy must be adopted to define the ground and constitution of the object. To embark further in metaphysics and claim that the will is free only obscures the problem. For example, Mr. Babbitt discusses the nature of the imagination and defines it qualitatively by the standards of truth and falsity; nowhere does he consider it pertinent to contend that the imagination is free. The question of its antecedents, its physiological correlates and determining causes, belongs to another province, and it is a confusion of categories to intrude the one upon the other. What Mr. Babbitt is contending for is the fact of choice, selection, and control, which nobody denies. The instructive task is to follow the course of the individual *élan*, to indicate the obstacles inherent in the possibilities open to it. Into what structure of sustained emotions, responsible desires, and settled attitude should an individual translate his inchoate situation? Often the elements will not harmonize.

Action discovers contradictions of purpose, and fate is the logic whereby the inexorable penalty for inconsistency of character is exacted. When the necessity of choice between two incompatible ideals involves the destiny of others the result is tragedy. But restraint and exclusions though they inevitably accompany each choice of the will are not of its essence. Nor is tragedy, though tragedy is possible, whenever man preserves that probity of desire which is moral continuity, and honor admits no divorce from the choices of the past. Will is ideal desire and the problem of the will is one of values and knowledge of the heart's true affinities. "For that is to be called love which is true, otherwise it is desire," as St. Augustine says.[14] "The right will is well directed love, and the wrong will is ill directed love . . . now these motions are evil if the love is evil; good if the love is good."[15] Will, then, is the effort to accommodate the future to the total relevant values of one's present situation, to make them explicit and grounded in the truth of one's nature, and thus to attain that fullness, consistency, and integrity of being which is one's good.

If, as Aristotle observes, the subject matter of ethics is the actions of men, and tragedy is the imitation of an action, and poetry is more universal than history and more concrete than philosophy, the precise task of the moralist becomes apparent: namely, to limit himself to individual actions as represented in literature, and to trace the progress of the *élan* as it settles into order. And it is obvious that both Mr. Babbitt and Santayana as moralists have neglected this intense study of the will. It is possible that each action will conclude differently and illustrate an ideal incompatible with the rest. Although the moralist would then amass an infinite variety of actions,

[14] *Trinity*, III, iv.

[15] *City of God*, XIV, 7.

each with its irreducible good, he would still be enabled to evaluate them and arrive at a general definition of the will. For the actions and their entailed goods while individually incompatible would be intelligible and rationally justifiable. Human wants and satisfactions are quite comprehensible. That their particular occasions, Helen of Troy, the murder of Agamemnon, the trial of Socrates, are unique and can never be materially recaptured is unimportant. It is what they represent of human purpose, nobility, and destiny, that grants them significance. The ideal appealed to in an action, consequently, is not arbitrary. Rooted in human nature it possesses a structure which allows of a rational formulation. The moralist being human and confined to a particular body with its interest, preferences, and sympathies, will never be able to attain complete impartiality; a certain bias will always accompany his judgments; and to that extent the definition of the good is an unrealizable ideal. Deep within himself lies the eventual ground of his judgments and in the end it will dictate his definitions of truth, good and reality. Yet in part his hidden judgments will be formed by the actions surveyed. The moralist in discovering the will of man in its dramatic unfolding, in sorting and distinguishing its loyalties and attitudes, will likewise discover himself. Perhaps the enterprise is fantastic and even for approximate success requires more powers than are possessed by a single man; and those endowed with the imagination, the understanding, the honesty, and the industry necessary might well devote them to more creative labors; yet the soul of man has its intrinsic interest, the theme is not ignoble, and is rewarding.

Mr. Babbitt has always kept the soul and its destiny within view. If he has concentrated more on the manifestations of its unhappy fate than its inward development and triumphant expressions, it is because he believes that it is first nec-

essary to weed our thought of falsehood. If he seems too remote from the plight of given individuals and too abstracted from the problems of distinct activities, it is because he believes that it is first necessary to face what seems the general predicament of modern times. In those problems which he has set himself he has succeeded magnificently. It is true to say of him that all who have read his books remain his debtors. Those who converse with him find him as generous with his companionship, as in his thought he is moderate and urbane. No more fitting summary can be given of his work than in the words of the tribute he paid to Confucius. "Though his kingdom is very much of this world, he puts emphasis not merely on the law of measure, but also on the law of humility. He was humble both in his 'submission to the will of heaven' and in his attitude towards the sages of old. He aspired at most to be the channel through which the moral experience of his race that had accumulated through long centuries and found living embodiment in these sages should be conveyed to the present and the future; in his own words, he was not a creator but a transmitter."

Bernard Bandler II

SEVENTH DECLAMATION

(Foreword: *The preceding six of these Declamations appeared in* The Dial. *They, and whatever others may finally be issued, are meant to possess each a certain validity independent of their fellows, while forming a sequence which should provide added interpretation by its order. The Declamations are a kind of fictive moralizing, wherein the dogmas are prior to the events, though not always to be read as absolutely as they are stated.*

The scheme, when working most effectively, should result in the writer's associating a code with its origins, and in the reader's glimpsing a situation behind a morality. Yet perhaps our sincerity is less a question of message than of manner.

This manner is not wholly pliant. At times it has compelled circumlocution. We assumed that reality can arise out of any convention; and if we were wrong in this assumption, the aesthetic of the Declamations is fundamentally imperiled. For in their attempt to provide a literary, rather than a vicarious, experience they embody a deliberate pompousness which is unpardonable unless pompousness is not necessarily bad.

The Declamations originally took shape as an objective, realistic novel. The material is finally given in a different form because I could not write it as I at first planned. The problem of moving a character from one room to another became sufficiently difficult to make narrative impossible. Thus the present method arose as a subterfuge, an avoidance.

The earlier Declamations deal with our protagonist's somewhat self-inflicted undoing and flight. He is a very frank, a very earnest, a very conscientious man, in whom one need place slight confidence. He has an enquiring mind, through failure assisted to focus itself upon the norms of conduct. He is writing to a certain Anthony, whom he considers privileged. Being not letters, but epistles, his Declamations remain unsent. He has left Anthony in full possession and enjoyment of a young woman, Florence, whom he also considers privileged. He believes in the justice of their union, though at great

discomfiture to himself. In proclaiming criteria and imperatives, with the garrulity of envy he allows his reminiscences to encroach upon his aphorisms.

The Declamations may eventually be assembled under the title: Towards a Better Life — Being the Statement of an Attitude. I have also considered such titles as Manifesto, and Testament. They are here mentioned for their possible value as an indication of purpose.)

RIGHTLY they cherish their nationality, for the sole distinction they possess is as members of a group. And so great is their desire for conformity, that in an environment of geniuses they might even have shown talent. They are all men of honour when their interests are not at stake — and as their indifference spreads to many areas, the vocabulary of justice still flourishes and exerts influence. On doing them a kindness, if one is too modest in accepting thanks, he finds them prompt to join in the belittling of his services. They preface a boast by avowing their dislike of boastfulness, and before saying ill of a neighbour assure you that they will say ill of no one. He would be a monstrosity among them who did not speak of frankness when speaking with caution, or who would not vaunt his full confidence in another on requiring him to warrant his promises before a notary. For one may commit infractions of their code with impunity, but only by granting the validity of the code itself. Yet on defending a cause unpopular with them, he will be judged capable of thievery and extortion — and were a murder to be committed, they would enquire into his whereabouts before searching for a fiend. I went among them as one rebuked, for there are so many things which, if still preserved as echoes, would condemn me. To earn their respect, I left my self-doubts unuttered — and only by keeping my work unseen was I accorded the honours due my profession. Our divergencies

being total, I felt no need to reveal them; had they been less, I should have been more liable to altercation. No longer required to wrest an existence from the wilderness, their intolerance for their natural enemies is now trained upon one another. At night the dogs bark in behalf of their masters. The dogs of the different farms exchange challenges — and it is the family units of the countryside proclaiming their isolation.

Since the occasion two years ago when I disappeared abruptly, both you and Florence must think of me as lapsing into silence. Yet for me these long months have been restless with the shouting of many voices. As though housing a fugitive in secret, I have spent clandestine hours with my distress, living among people to whom I could mention nothing. Repeatedly I have speculated upon my unclean courtship, and marvelled at the contrasted accuracy of your advances. Testing the evidence that your affection for Florence was abating, I have imagined the growing tentatives of separation; I have pictured your love, like a turtle's heart, beating after death.

When walking through the country in early spring, you have observed a freshcut stump, a massive wound, bleeding its sap into the sunlight. The condition of its baffled roots, with their potentialities severed of purpose, could be the symbol of my predicament. Consider their inarticulate sorrow — yet despite vocabulary my own unhappiness tends to become as puzzled. I have given thought to my bodily well-being, attempting to promote by health a kind of physical certainty which, while not removing doubts, would deprive them of their maximum annoyance. During this self-imposed exile, I know that my eyes have been less eager — not through increased hopelessness, for my hopelessness was always thorough, but through absence of an object for them to light upon. I have thus felt the eagerness die out of my own eyes.

Yet could I think of Florence so recurrently without some reciprocation on her part? Are universal causes so disparate that this giving-out could remain unanswered? In speaking her name, I did so with no avowed faith in magic, no belief that the manipulation of the syllables could bring me command of the reality, but solely because my preoccupations made such labelling imperative. The word did not deny the emptiness about me, though I seemed to have cancelled something by the utterance of it.

Perhaps it is to Genevieve I owe my life — and at least to her I owe the fact that this evil was suddenly made bearable. In no way could she have been different and served to aid me as she did. Possessing the characteristics of great expressiveness, yet lacking some medium in which to embody her emotions, she was compelled to situate the experiences of poetry in the disposing of her own person. A pronounced gentleness, which was only secondarily absence of spirit, made her susceptible to certitude in another — and as I gave deep thought to the matter, I saw that, while she was still light-hearted, she was equipped already for her eventual abandonment to my wishes. Thus, I was healed by new designing — and for this I am to Genevieve permanently grateful. There have been moments when my delight in her loveliness was exceptional — when a posture or expression astonished me. "Cherish these," I have told myself, as I made efforts to fix them upon my memory. But though I still recall that there were scenes of this nature, their details have escaped me. And on occasions, during our companionship, when I have laid hands upon her, in my enjoyment I have wished that we were at liberty, ranging through a variety of cities, and that I might come upon her by hazard, meeting her in odd places, and thereby multiplying this experience under many guises. Was I, in inventing the fiction of my marriage, attempting to help

her despite myself, by suggesting an added cause to resist me? Or was I contriving to make her acquiescence more heinous in her own eyes, and thus more a tribute to myself — for I had imparted this false confidence previous to my demands as a lover, insisting that she keep it secret. As she did, and she believed me unquestioningly until I myself disabused her of her mistake, when admitting to her that I had asked another woman of the village to become my wife. In depriving Genevieve of some happiness — already precarious through being ill adjusted to the criteria of the community — I was also confirming her refinement, through perpetuating the uncertainties I had imposed upon her. Further, I had schooled her to suffering, by enlarging its terminology for her, by teaching her not only to bear it but to expect it — and my love, as well as my admiration, was intensified by her silent acceptance of my plans. A woman strengthened by lack of sensitivity would have exposed me, or at least rebuked me, but she received my disclosures without protest.

Can one be said to have misused a woman's gentleness who has always thought of it with gratitude, applying it for the very preservation of his own life, and even serving by his praise to aid her in the strengthening of such an attribute? I assured its permanency, by setting an appropriate stamp upon her, giving her as it were the cues to her most valuable development. Though slighting certain more obvious obligations, I was scrupulous in the shouldering of remoter ones, bringing always to my dealings with her a trying considerateness for these attitudes which I had assisted her to form. For I accepted the responsibilities I had incurred in putting our relationship upon so exceptional a basis — and that its intensity might be maintained, I spent many hours considering it while she slept. Though she offered to relinquish me, I refused to accept this opportunity to leave her forthwith at her bidding

—for I was resolved that she should not feel my marriage to another as implying the ridicule of her past delight in my praise. At much inconvenience, I still insisted upon clandestine meetings with her, to shield her from the thought that her own virtues had told against her — and only gradually, and with the appearance of speechless regret, I yielded to her insistence upon separation.

During the more tentative eras of the Church, there was a sect which held that one is purified by excess, virtue remaining in the sterile ash left from the conflagration. And similarly we may conclude that there is no inducement in refraining, and all issues must be both met and mirrored, though we may have cause to regret that our life is not such as to show this contention to its best advantage. I should willingly vote that no exhortation arise from a context which does it discredit, but I have not been certain of the reprehensible — could not decide what are the causes of insight and what exists in spite of it. If naturally inquisitive, we may find in failure an added incentive to brood upon the norms of justice. Exceptional wavering may end in constancy, as one learns the quicker to stabilize his conduct without regard for his moodiness. And too great good-will can lead a man to express his arguments vilely, thus giving us in one volume and for one price both a doctrine and its rebuttal. Should we speak of guilt, the crude-minded look to some evidence of slaying or suborning, some treachery for profit, unfit to perceive that we would indicate something so little subsequent to an offence that it might rather be called incentive than result. Yet I would ask no one to believe me virtuous, holding that all virginity were best enjoyed alone. I have sat at the window, silhouetted by the lamplight, thinking how a prowler without motive could slay me undetected. I have sought the spread of painlessness to further free areas of investigation, rejoicing that I did as the

rest of mankind though preferring to do so at some remove from my neighbours, submitting to a self-enquiry maintained without assent, accepting the continued dwelling upon my own attributes — a repetitiveness which, though not solicited, is the equivalent of great industry — and by many subterfuges of thought and action bargaining to keep insanity logically submerged.

In summer, during the late sunset, I have walked my acres (for can I not call that mine which I have earned by marriage) have walked these acres, knowing myself vaguely driven, asking for much, too much, expecting nothing. Vigorous young frogs chirp, doubtless enchantingly, in the swampy portions of the meadows. The trees fringing the crest of the hill show no evidence of wind. And distantly, against the seething of my pipe, I catch a bell, shaken by the cropping of one cow, yet announcing the herd. The night patiently descends, with a coexistence of sound and silence which is the quality of expectation, and thus of twilight.

Dare we, on such occasions, feel ourselves on the verge of wisdom, and melt with some kind of theoretic charity as we consider our continent passing into darkness and oceans turning cumbrously towards the sun? One's death becomes preferable to the ultimate destruction or dessication of our planet. And even the perishing of mankind seems less abhorrent than the thought that profound volumes will lie unread and symphonies be devoid of meaning. I would see all gathered into lore, the defunct vestiges of enthusiasm jealously collated, prizing what has been done against the tyranny of death. With each life the rising of a new certitude, the physical blossoming free of hesitancy, the unanswerable dogmatism of growth. Who would not call men to him — though he should feel compelled to dismiss them when they came, communion residing solely in the summons.

KENNETH BURKE

RAIN

AS the rain falls
so does
your love

bathe every
open
object of the world —

In houses
the priceless dry
rooms
of illicit love
where we live
hear the wash of the
rain —

There
paintings
and fine
metalware
woven stuffs —
all the whorishness
of our

delight

sees

RAIN

from its window
the spring wash
of your love
the falling
rain —

The trees
are become
beasts fresh risen
from
the sea —
water

trickles
from the crevices of
their hides —

So my life is spent
to keep out love
with which
she rains upon

the world

of spring

drips

so spreads

the words

far apart to let in

her love —

And running in between
the drops

the rain

is a kind physician

the rain
of her thoughts over
the ocean
every

where

walking with
invisible swift feet
over

RAIN

the helpless
waves —

Unworldly love
that has no hope
of the world

and that
cannot change the world
to its delight —

The rain
falls upon the earth
and grass and flowers
come
perfectly

into form from its
liquid

clearness

But love is
unworldly

and nothing
comes of it but love

following

and falling endlessly
from
her thoughts.

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

HISTORIAN AND CRITIC OF LETTERS: A DIAGNOSIS

THE American scholar is not an expert in the field of literature. He aspires to be an expert not in literature but in literary history, and comparatively fails. He insists that the only scholarship worth having is scientific, despite the fact that scientific scholarship alone cannot enable him to understand literary history. The more facts he accumulates, and the more he seeks to control his facts through some principle of order, the more does he grow aware of a certain superficiality in his results, the more does he suspect that a certain futility is his final reward. The sense of futility that has infected the whole of contemporary thought has not spared the scholar. The cause of it, in his case, I conceive to be an inadequate conception of literary scholarship and of literary history.

Literary history, in its orthodox form, is little more than a hundred years old. It was virtually a creation of the romantic movement of the late eighteenth century, when the historical sense — the sense of historical relativity, of the otherness of all other times and places — first entered vividly into the consciousness of men. More and more, men came to think, not in the old terms of identity, permanence, and universal validity, but in the new terms of difference, of change, of origins, of development, of evolution. "The doctrine of evolution," as Josiah Royce asserted, "is in heart and essence the child of the romantic movement itself." Although the relativity of cultures had been perceived long before by St. Évremond, the first impressive vision of the evolution of cultures in time and

space was that of Herder, to whom our modern literary history owes more than to any other thinker. In the century after Herder came the definite establishment of the scientific doctrine of organic evolution, a doctrine that profoundly modified all departments of human thought, including history and literary history.

Literary history, in our present strict view of it, is an attempt to ascertain and describe the sequence of literary phenomena objectively, scientifically, without the bias of criticism. Its ultimate purpose is to present the history of literature as a whole, regardless of linguistic and national boundaries. Hence, in theory, all the literature departments of our universities coalesce in the department of comparative literature. Subordinate to this final purpose is the study of each national literature, Greek, French, German, etc. Subordinate in turn is the history of movements and periods within each national literature, of forms (such as the drama) and themes (such as the Arthurian cycle), of the works of each individual author, and finally, of each work of each author. Thus, if literary history were ever completely and finally written, we should be able to assign to every work a place of its own in an unbroken sequence, and every fact regarding every work would likewise have a local and permanent habitation. Owing to gaps in the record, to the complexity of the task, and to the frailty of human reason, this comprehensive aim can never be fulfilled, but to it the literary historian addresses himself in the hopeful spirit of the natural scientist. He regards literature as a developing organism enjoying perpetual life and containing within itself lesser organisms, the literature of nations, periods, etc., or, to begin at the other end, he seeks to establish the relation of each literary work to its environment, in the largest sense: its relation to the author's life (its personal envi-

ronment or biographic setting); its relation to other works that exerted an influence upon it; its relation to the cultural situation of the time — the social, economic, moral, religious, philosophical, and aesthetic conditions when it was written; its relation to the physical environment, natural and artistic; its relation to the peculiar spirit of the nation or race whence it issued. What remains after all these influences have been accounted for is regarded as the unique element in the work, its own special contribution, which may in turn become a new influence upon the future. Once published, the work so to speak takes its place in nature.

Thus conceived, the task of the literary historian is closely similar to that of the biologist. Both concern themselves with organisms, with heredity, with environment, with evolution. Neither of them concerns himself with worth or value; it is not for them to praise or blame, but merely to describe what happened. If the historical critic of literature may be said to have any criterion for the judgment of what is excellent and what inferior, that criterion (in theory if not always in practice) is merely success in the struggle for existence. He assumes that it is the fittest works which emerge and survive. He does not interest himself in the aesthetic qualities that defy time and place, but measures a work relatively to its own time and place. The judgment that he arrives at is purely historical, never personal or human. Unless he momentarily steps out of the rôle that he has conceived for himself, he is just as much interested in a really bad book as in a good book, provided that they are equal in representativeness and influence, and is *more* interested if, as is often the case, the bad book is superior in these respects. The law that he seeks is the law of fitness in the phenomenal order. He does not consider books under the form of eternity (*sub specie aeternitatis*), but

devotes himself to describing them in their contingent aspect. He has a single guiding (and limiting) principle, the description of literary phenomena, the interpretation of literary facts.

The importance of this task, the beneficent effect of the scientific movement in assisting us to a profounder literary history, I do not think I am disposed to underrate, since I happen myself to find literary history fascinating. Although it is not properly an end in itself, it is assuredly an indispensable means to the understanding and hence to the criticism of literature. How can we deal profitably with a literary work of the past, such as Chaucer's *Troilus and Cressida*, for example, unless we have learned what history can tell us as to the object of the poem, its expression of the special interests of the age in which it was written, its references to current conventions and happenings? Such study helps us to see the poem as it really is, not merely as it appears to us when we read it in an age that has quite other special interests. Literary scholarship, as well as history, has gained new powers since the time, no farther back than the eighteenth century, when, as Taine puts it, men of every race and century were supposed to be all but identical, "as if they had been turned out of a common mold."

Nevertheless, we have purchased our new powers at a very high price. Insisting, at all costs, that we must be scientific, our scholars have too often forgotten that art and science are two things, that the inwardness of art and the externality of science are essentially alien, that the services of science in the study of an art must always be merely tangential, that literary history, if it is to be other than superficial, cannot be regarded as a science. In their headlong pursuit of historical data our scholars have inclined to shift their center of inter-

est from literature to literary history, making history not a means but an end in itself. Instead of regarding time and place as obstacles to be overcome and surpassed, or disturbing factors to be eventually cancelled, they content themselves with living in other times and places. They immerse themselves in the study of environment — biographical, social, literary, and so forth — and, when they occasionally emerge from this study and from the work of other scholars of their own sort, they read the literature itself largely for its reflection of the history of its time. In all their serious activities, their research, their articles and books, their college or university instruction, they commonly proceed as if unaware that their subject is literature and that the central means of understanding literature is not historical erudition but a disciplined natural sense.

In a charming *Tatler* paper, Addison contrasts the pedantic critic with a simple young lady devoid of rules but possessed of "natural sense," much as a satirist today might contrast the pedantic professor with an untutored woman — I could name one myself — who understands literature far better and who could explain the knotty lines of a poem to the scholar helpless amid all his paraphernalia. This natural sense, this aptitude for entering intuitively into the inwardness of art, is after all the fundamental virtue of scholarship. Although it is a special gift, just as the detective power of the historical investigator is a special gift, it can unquestionably be developed and perfected. Through constant exercise, through familiarity with at least one fine art other than literature (preferably, I should say, painting or sculpture), and through increasing knowledge of life and wisdom in the art of life (life being the subject of literature), it passes into good taste and critical insight, the ultimate powers of comprehension. If

these powers are so rarely and so shabbily displayed by our professors of literature, it is mainly because they have chosen to exercise not natural sense but scientific method, which, like the rigmarole of rules in the eighteenth century, leads only too readily to that pedantry which Addison defined as "a form of knowledge without the power of it." As natural sense can be developed, so, unhappily, it can become atrophied. I need not enlarge upon the stock example, Darwin's loss of the faculty of responding to poetry; nearer examples abound among those "puissant Darwinians" who, as Stuart Sherman bitterly pointed out years ago, have the traditions of literature in their keeping. Their subject is not literature but the natural history of literature, as formerly it was not literature but linguistic philology. Instead of speaking of the Department of English Literature, for example, they might more accurately speak of the Department of English Literary History.

But this is not all. We not only tend to abandon literature in favor of literary history, we also tend to abandon literary history in favor of isolated facts. Some of our leading scholars and most of the rank and file, fearful of the broad interpretations that history properly involves, become absorbed in the safer task of mastering small groups of facts. Instead of having a due respect for facts as the necessary basis for sound knowledge and the higher activities of scholarship, they appear to worship facts as facts, things as things. Employing an expert mechanical technique, they give themselves up to a blind pursuit of facts, an aimless accumulation of small additions to the sum of knowledge. If one questions the wisdom of their procedure, they will usually justify themselves by means of what I may term a mystical faith in the *brick*. They will point out that each brick in a building is essential, and that

they and their students are collecting bricks for future builders. Whether the bricks will ever be used, whether they are the particular bricks that will be needed by future builders, does not, in their mystical faith in the brick, concern them. Their logic, if dubious, is better than their common sense. Common sense would seem to dictate that the supply of facts should not vastly outrun the demand. The fact collectors of today are like manufacturers indiscriminately producing bricks of all kinds in appalling quantities, in total disregard of the economic law of supply and demand. We must frankly admit, it is a poor way of doing business. Let us keep our common sense, our sense of proportion. Let us remember Poincaré's remark that the universe is spawning milliards of "facts" every second. Let us remember that many, yes, the majority of ascertainable facts are not worthy of being recorded. Let us remember the real danger — I trust that this is not obscurantism — that knowledge of facts will overwhelm literary scholarship and prove to be a curse. More than a quarter of a century ago Friedrich Paulsen wrote, "The springs which scientific research has opened . . . flow and flow until historian and history itself are in danger of being swallowed up in the flood" — a catastrophe that today appears more imminent than when this scholar predicted it. Even a limited field, Paulsen maintained, cannot be mastered; and we have all heard this echoed, dolefully, by various American scholars. We do not spend our days and nights reading the authors whom we profess to be concerned with, but the writings of other scholars immersed in literary history. Largely unfamiliar even with the one national literature to which we are ostensibly devoted, we are all but wholly unfamiliar with other national literatures, and seek to dignify, with the term "specialization," our obvious provincialism. Intent up-

on erudition of the German type, we do not even take time for thought. There is truth, as well as caricature, in the saying of John Stuart Mill that "The characteristic of Germany is knowledge without thought; of France, thought without knowledge; of England, neither knowledge nor thought." "Knowledge without thought," the amassing of historical data unvitalized by the deeper processes of reason and imagination, describes only too well a common mode of American scholarship that passes for real scholarship. Only rarely is a protest raised, as when Professor Stoll, in a paper read before the Modern Language Association and published in *Studies in Philology*, sums up our random scholarship by saying: "If the sources, influences, and identifications *were* demonstrated, it were something, but not very much. What a prodigious expenditure of labor, so little relevant to the real understanding of the author in question or his work! . . . To the genuine man of letters what a queer and puzzling thing the program of a Modern Language Association must be, with all its minute and extraneous considerations! The barren discussions are not only the proofs which do not prove but those which, if they do, little matter. . . . Every fact, in a sense, is important, but not every fact is relevant or congruous; and it is extremely incongruous that the higher study of literature in this country and in Europe should be so much in the hands of mere antiquarians, [whose] teaching . . . is as irrelevant and barren as their writing."

From this comparative futility many scholars have recently sought to escape by going a step farther in the wrong direction, that is, another step away from literature. Not satisfied with abandoning literature in favor of literary history, they are now abandoning literary history in favor of general history.

Literary history proper is concerned primarily with the *literary* environment of an author — the state of literary affairs at the time he was writing, his relation with predecessors and successors, the relation of his own earlier and later work. Scholars of the new type have come to feel that the merely literary environment is superficial, that to study literature in this fashion is to study it in a vacuum, and accordingly they have turned primarily to the non-literary environment — the economic tendencies, the social forces, the political trends that seem to determine, in the last analysis, the special direction of the creative efforts of authors.

Endeavoring to escape from the bogey of a vacuum by immersing themselves in general history, literary scholars of this type are in effect transferring their allegiance from the republic of letters to the republic of historiography. Here they may do, and I think are doing, useful work. But from the point of view of the republic of letters (which is our point of view here), this transfer of allegiance is an act of treason. To be sure, the term literary history is double, and looks two ways. But as greenish-blue is a color more green than blue, so literary history is a study more concerned with literature than with history. Common sense should suffice to answer the question, whether the primary object of literary history is to serve our understanding of literature or our understanding of history. Literature, indeed, should interest general historians for its revelation of moods and motives that have a correlative in outward events, and general history should interest literary scholars for its outward revelation of the inner life expressed in literature. Yet the division of labor dictates that this reciprocal interest must remain subordinate. The central concern of the historian of literature is the history of literature. He may, if he wishes, regard literary his-

tory as a branch of social history, and write, for example, such a history of American literature as Professor A. M. Schlesinger proposes, in which Emerson would be given considerably less attention than the school readers of William H. McGuffey; or he may attempt a *Kulturgeschichte* or *Geistesgeschichte,* in which the great writers represent the highest culture of the people and are viewed in relation to a significant background of non-literary expressions of the time and land, a writer like Emerson, in this case, becoming a central figure illustrative of various social, religious, and political manifestations of nineteenth-century America. Farther than this he may not go, without abandoning his field of study.

The whole tendency of our present preoccupation with history of all sorts is, however, to drive the literary scholar out of his subject. Unless he firmly envisages his own special task, he is likely to submit to this centrifugal force more and more, till he reaches the periphery and, before he is well aware of what has happened, finds himself pushed out altogether and deposited on another sphere. This is clearly the tendency of our present American scholarship. When a professor of English is awarded a Guggenheim fellowship in order to make "a study of the historical and legal literature of ancient Ireland, with special reference to Celtic parallels in the Welsh laws and historical works, and the relationships and intercourse of the early Irish with the Welsh and Northumbrian people of the island of Britain"; when candidates for the doctorate in English are permitted to write dissertations on such a subject as "Northern Travelers in the Southern States before the Civil War"; when professors of English are awarded the Pulitzer prize in History and recognized in the League of Nations list of works in History; when more and more books and dissertations are of such a nature that

they merit more attention in historical than in literary reviews and only historians are competent to pass judgment upon them, something is obviously wrong with our conception of literary scholarship. However much general historians may welcome these workers in history, literary scholars who remain faithful to their tasks can only regard them as deserters. Plainly, one of the chief needs of our scholarship today, as has recently been pointed out, is an authoritative *Laocoön* that shall resolve this confusion between history and literary history.

Another endeavor to attain profundity in literary history is driving scholars into psychology — into psychological histories of individuals and even of peoples.

Some one has suggested that the dividing line in recent German literature has been made not so much by the *Weltkrieg* as by the speculations of Dr. Freud. There are signs that the speculations of Dr. Freud will also mark a dividing line in scholarship. Outside the universities, such a line already exists: amateurs and dabblers of all sorts have made a hasty study of both psychology and literature and written biographies and criticism professedly scientific and actually buncombe. Within the universities, the idea of a sudden drop from the clear world of dates and outward events into the murky Well of the subconscious has been rather disconcerting, though a few scholars, seeking light in darkness, have timorously peered down and a very few have made the plunge and are cautiously reporting their observations. Fortunately, however, most scholars are, in this matter at least, still keeping their heads, realizing that it is futile to apply psychology to literature until the psychology proves to be other than pseudo-psychology. We have around us several new schools of psychologists, each prominent, each asserting claims, not always modest, to scientific knowledge, yet seriously conflict-

ing with each other. They are having a tough tussle with the mystery of the human mind and heart. It may well turn out to be the verdict of the future that all of them were wrong in their pretensions, that, by abandoning the traditional alliance of psychology with philosophy and limiting their research to the realm of science, they made discoveries that are true so far as they penetrate but that do not penetrate far, discoveries of certain aspects of reality that cannot be reconciled with other aspects of reality. Today, at all events, the attempt to apply the new psychology to literature is premature and treacherous and therefore journalistic rather than scholarly. The attempt may well become popular, however, because it seems to promise plausibility on very easy terms. If plausibility is least easy in an exact study like linguistic philology, it is certainly easier in literary history, still easier in general history, and easiest of all in psychological interpretation, which is nearly pure guesswork. Incidentally, it offers plausibility on very interesting terms as well, combining, as it does, the charm of lubricity with the sternness of science. But it offers no real escape to the literary scholar seeking to evade his besetting sense of superficiality.

In which direction he will turn next — whether to thyroid glands or some other explanation of literature suggested by modern science — I cannot predict. I can predict with confidence, however, that no path opened by science will ever bring him to his goal, or even lead him far on his way, and that he will eventually be driven by the very nature of things to look for help outside the realm of science. Since literature is an art, he will be driven to look more and more to philosophy for light on its content and to the other arts for light upon its form. But especially, he will be driven to seek the aid of literary criticism.

The attitude of the typical American scholar toward criticism is very curious, and deserves analysis. (I am well aware, of course, that the typical scholar does not exist as such.) His attitude is a double and conflicting one. On the one hand, he has a cynical fear of all criticism, whether it is subjective or objective, impressionistic or dogmatic. He is in the habit of contrasting the knowledge which the scholar records with the "speculation" in which the critic indulges. He has a very special horror of the dilettante, with whom he commonly identifies the critic. That is one attitude. Along with this cynical fear of criticism, however, he secretly welcomes it, and indeed himself uses it in his teaching and publication, despite his theory. Sometimes he borrows judgments from convention, from the fund of opinions in which mankind has pretty generally agreed, and sometimes he makes his own personal judgments of value, quite in the manner of the impressionist. This scarcely needs demonstration; any respected book in the field of literary history will show that it is so. The fact is that literary historians, of all types, are involved in an inner contradiction which they refuse to face. Inheriting romanticism as well as science, the typical scholar displays the familiar romantic conflict of head and heart, his head concerning itself with the solid facts of history, while his heart secretly claims its birthright to emotion, enthusiasm, and all manner of delights. The typical scholar is part scientist, part dilettante — it is only the proportion of the parts that varies from scholar to scholar. He does not object, at bottom, to impressionism, indulging in it himself and respecting the right of other sound scholars to indulge in it. In much of his life and work he is an irresponsible adventurer, living not only in the phenomenal order of science but also in the romantic disorder of Vagabondia. Both scientist and dilettante, he may be thought of as a compound

of Francis Bacon and Anatole France — a hard-boiled epicurean. If "the anarchy of impressionism," as Mr. Spingarn avers, is the modern critic's "natural reaction against the mechanical theories and jejune text-books of the professors," it is at the same time the professor's natural reaction against himself. This desire for a "compensation" has also been indicated by Emile Legouis, who observes that a Frenchman reading foreign scholarship is likely to marvel how the "worship of facts and details as such, in the raw state, is at times compensated by fits of mysticism, so that the reader has the hard soil of reality under his feet, and far above, at almost immeasurable distance, heavenly visions or absolute judgments not always visibly connected with the humble facts that gave them rise."

The time is rapidly approaching when the scholar will no longer be able to ignore the problem of standards, the problem of criticism. The deliquium of the scientific study of literature will itself remind him of the fact that, logically, criticism is both anterior and posterior to scientific knowledge. It is anterior because science owes its existence to the assumption that knowledge is a good, that truth is of value — an ethical assumption. It is posterior because science is not a final end; even if our knowledge should advance infinitely, we should still confront the problem of what to do with it. The slogan of "Knowledge for its own sake" is as empty as the slogan of "Art for its own sake." We delude ourselves if we regard science as a resting place or as the whole of life. Realizing this, many scientists — Haeckel and Huxley, for instance — have gone on beyond science in their quest of a whole view. They are right in so doing; wrong only when they attempt to transform science itself into philosophy. Thus, too, does the literary historian reveal a right instinct when he employs

standards of criticism; he is wrong only when he is a dabbler. If it is true, as the scientists tell us, that all men are in some sort poets, it is equally true, as the critics ought to tell us oftener, that all men are critics. "Criticism," said the late Mr. Brownell, "is much criticized,—which logically establishes its title." All men are critics; all scholars are critics; the only question is, are they good critics or bad critics? Cynically neglecting criticism, our scholars have pursued knowledge—to quote the words of their master Bacon, who really condemns them—"have entered into a desire of learning and knowledge, sometimes upon a natural curiosity and inquisitive appetite; sometimes to entertain their minds with variety and delight; sometimes for ornament and reputation; and sometimes to enable them to victory of wit and contradiction; and most times for lucre and profession; and seldom sincerely to give a true account of their gift of reason, to the benefit and use of men." If the last phrase be interpreted in its best sense, I can see in this passage only rebuke of our present scholarship as prevailingly mean and idle. Not in our prevailing motives resides the advisableness of improving literary knowledge, but rather in the critical determination of the worth of literature to men, its human benefit and use. As historian, the scholar has the task of rendering our knowledge more and more exact and thorough; as critic, he has the task of rendering our standards of worth more and more conclusive and serviceable. Linguistic, textual, and historical knowledge is an indispensable preliminary to literary criticism, and literary criticism is the culmination of all literary scholarship. The scholarly writer or teacher who confines his interest to the history of literature stops at the roadside inn and never arrives.

That critical research is more difficult than scientific research must be granted. The more, then, should we refrain

from random judgments and lazy impressionism, and apply our boasted industry to the search for those constants in literature and literary theory in which reside the standards that defy the varying provincialisms of the ages of history. It was in the Alexandrian age, to which our own is similar, that the principle of "universal consent" first clearly emerged, in the treatise on the Sublime attributed to Longinus. "That is truly great," said Longinus, "which give much food for fresh reflection; which it is hard, nay impossible, to resist; of which the memory is strong and indelible. . . . When men of different habits, lives, ambitions, ages, all take one and the same view about the same writings, the verdict and pronouncement of such dissimilar individuals give a powerful assurance, beyond all gainsaying, in favor of that which they admire." We need today a number of Longinuses to redirect us to this principle of consent, this unity of memory, which runs through the ages, of that which is strong and indelible. We have now before us, as in a laboratory, a collection of art and literature immeasurably more extensive than in the time of Aristotle or of Longinus, in which the scholar may study not only those changing aspects of literature to which we have given all but exclusive attention for a century, but also those unchanging aspects which are vastly more important. Thence must come our standards, our criteria, the "laws" of literature, which, like the "laws" of nature, are simply the best hypotheses. The results of such research must be mixed, no doubt, with serious uncertainties; but so must the results of those other types of research that seek to lay bare the secret springs of works of art with the instruments of literary history, general history, and psychology. If anything, the uncertainties appear less serious in the realm of value than in the realm of science. As one of the most distinguished of American scholar-critics has recent-

ly argued, "The law of taste is the least changeable fact of human nature, less changeable than religious creeds, far less changeable than scientific theories. The advent of Christianity has left it untouched, and the waning of faith does not trouble it. The hypotheses of science — elemental spirits, antiphlogiston, corpuscular and undulatory explanations of light, atoms and ions and the continuum, catastrophism and natural selection — come and pass and come again, while the central tradition of taste is still the same." If this is even arguable, it ill becomes the historical scholar to display a cynical fear of aesthetic criticism, especially since his attitude is open to the suspicion of having its true origin, not in a reasoned view of the matter, but in that unresolved inner contradiction which I have described. It is impossible to take very seriously the opinion of a man whose head and heart appear not to belong to the same person.

If the scholar does admit that criticism is the logical completion of literary history, he is likely to go on to say: "Let the critic do what he can and I will do the same. Interests differ; my own serious interest is in literary history, which is quite enough to occupy all my time." This argument has already been sufficiently answered by the observation that every reputable historian does use second-hand or personal judgments of excellence, and thus in practice acknowledges that without such judgments scholarship would be incomplete. He must be a critic *in addition to* being an historian. But more than this, as I wish to show now, he must be a critic *in order to* be an historian.

Now, among the tasks of the historian is the determination of literary sources and influences. So long as these involve definite resemblances in diction, mechanical form, images, and ideas, the historian regards his scientific method of observa-

tion and reasoning as adequate for his purpose, but the moment he turns to indefinite resemblances in beauty, elusive resemblances in aesthetic effects and the aesthetic causes of these effects, he is aware that his usual instruments are no longer sufficient and that he must now rely upon taste. Taste is his only means of defining aesthetic qualities and showing their repetition in successive authors. It need not be purely personal and arbitrary, and indeed cannot be. We need only stop to reflect, and apply the historical method to our own taste, to perceive that this taste has antecedents, and that it illustrates Coleridge's definition of taste as "the representative and reward of our past conscious reasonings, insights, and conclusions." These have sources outside of ourselves. As Brownell remarked, "Taste indeed is essentially a matter of tradition. No one originates his own. Of the many instances in which mankind is wiser than any man it is one of the chief." The best taste, I take it, is simply that which most nearly coincides with the past conscious reasonings, insights, and conclusions of mankind. Certainly taste itself, whether good or bad, is a spontaneous form of criticism, a criticism that does not deliberate and hold the object at a distance, but operates as feeling, bringing reader and author into rapport and at the same time separating them in some degree because of an emotional judgment — a liking of this, a disliking of that aspect of the work, in accordance with the aesthetic habits that the reader has formed. Thus, if the literary historian can theoretically keep deliberate criticism out of his studies, he cannot practically dispense with taste and the criticism latent in taste. He will need taste when he desires to show, for example, to what extent the aesthetic qualities of Milton reappear in Wordsworth, or to what extent the qualities of Greek art were revitalized in the Hellenics of Landor. I think it

could be demonstrated that he will need taste, not only in dealing with aesthetic but also in dealing with intellectual, ethical, and spiritual indebtedness, since there is no beauty devoid of content and every work of art is a whole which is greater than all the parts; so that the ideal historian will render a sound and fundamental interpretation only if he occupies a central not an eccentric point of view, a truly humane philosophy. But I will not now press this extension of the argument; it is enough if we are safe in concluding that the literary historian, when dealing with aesthetic sources and influences, cannot hope to be thorough if he is "without taste" or displays "bad taste."

We are now in a position to understand why the historian attains his most striking triumphs when concerned with inferior literature. It is because his methods and instruments most nearly suffice for the explanation of such literature, while they do not suffice for the explanation of superior literature. If the success of books is in question, brief success may be accounted for by temporary and non-aesthetic causes, but protracted success issues from excellences that are largely timeless and aesthetic, and permanent success from excellences that are wholly so. In direct proportion to the excellence of the work, therefore, is the historian's need of the capacity to explain its public reception and literary influence, by means of the instruments of criticism. As it happens, this situation is the exact reverse of that of the critic, whose judgments are least secure when he is dealing with literature outside the central stream of traditional taste, and most secure when he concerns himself with the great tradition itself. Where history is weakest, criticism is strongest, and the historian needs its strength even for the accomplishment of his own task. A thoroughgoing historian must also be a critic. Though the

judgment that he aims at is historical, though he seeks to measure a work, as we have seen, relatively to its time and place, concerning himself with fitness rather than excellence and caring nothing whether a book be good or bad, the historian is bound to observe that "in any given age certain virtues are greatly admired, certain faults hardly perceived," and hence to decide what the virtues and faults of literature really are. Though he endeavors to explain rather than to praise or censure, though he is interested in the origin of aesthetic works, the causes of aesthetic results, he is bound to observe that these aesthetic results themselves become in turn causes and must therefore be understood. If the historian is not to be superficial, he must deal, after all, with virtues and faults, with the values of aesthetic results. Just as we deplore criticism unconcerned with historical knowledge, so must we deplore historical knowledge unconcerned with criticism. The place of criticism, in a word, is not only *beyond* history, it is also *within* history.

Though living like us in an age of relativity, Joubert perceived the element of truth in that old conception of the unity of men which had been cast aside by the new historical sense. "There is something unchanging in man (*quelque chose d'immuable*)," he declared, "and that is why there are unchanging rules in the arts and in works of art, beauties which will always please or modes of expression that will give pleasure only for a short time." With this "something unchanging" our scholars, whether historians or critics, will hereafter more largely concern themselves. Only by an earnest study of the unchanging can our criticism, at present mainly impressionistic, free itself from caprice and aimlessness. Only by an earnest study of the unchanging can our literary history, at present merely scientific, evade that recurrent sense of inse-

curity that is driving it, in vain, from one scientific obsession to another. Only by the integration of history and criticism, the temporary and the permanent, motion and rest, can the literary scholar really escape from the superficiality and futility that appear to crown all his labors. He need have no qualms about superficiality and futility if these labors reach all the way from external facts to permanent aesthetic qualities.

This extension of his field of study will carry him outside of science. And why not? Literature is more than science, since, unlike science, it is itself critical, itself selective and qualitative, itself concerned with human values that have no counterpart in nature; and literature can be understood only when studied with the instruments it itself employs, which are philosophical — ethical and aesthetic in vital fusion — vastly more than they are scientific. We need criticism — not a confined aesthetic or art-for-art's-sake criticism, but criticism as comprehensive in its implications as that of Aristotle — if we are to be scholars and not pedants. Modern American scholarship is in a way to becoming a veritable Polyphemus, choicely nourished on human food yet endowed with one eye only.

We must, then, set about restoring the traditional alliance of scholarship and criticism, the divorce of which has worked injury to both and havoc with education. It has made American scholarship narrowly mechanical and progressively tangential. It has encouraged an American criticism that can only be characterized as ignorant and aimlessly impressionistic, for the lamentable state of the critical journals is largely the consequence of academic failure to uphold the past as a school of judgment. And it has played a major rôle in the disintegration of American education, for it has made the study of the

humanities scientific in an age already blinded with excess of scientific light, an age that is groping in vain for such other light as literature could shed if it were rightly studied.

Postscript

From the *time* conception, the historical relativity of the scholars, no escape is provided by the impressionists, whose theory finally rests on the Protagorean doctrine that "The truth is what appears to each man at each *time*." Nor is escape provided by the small but earnest band of critics who are concerned with what their leader, Randolph Bourne, termed "a new American nationalism." Despite their scorn for the "academic" mind, the new nationalists are actually closely akin to the historical critics. Like them, they are descendants of Taine; only, they are descendants of Whitman also, and are less interested in the past than in the present and future. Instead of being researchers, they prefer being spectators or prophets. They endeavor to relate contemporary and future American literature with the "forces" that force literature into certain grooves. Though they speak of "adventure" and cry, "*Allons!* the road is before us!", they are at bottom determinists. Their adventure, indeed, is no more than sailing on a ship whose captain has secret orders. Though they speak much of "culture," superficially in the manner of Arnold, their culture is finally dependent not on the will of God or of man but on the forces of heredity, environment, evolution. Such is the drift of Lewis Mumford. Fifteen years ago Van Wyck Brooks, in *America's Coming-of-Age,* called in the plainest language (pages 104-05, 128, 163, 168-69, 179) for a definite "programme," even for "catchwords," but instead of outlining such a programme he has ever since remained spectator and prophet. Henry S. Canby, though casting a

wider than national net, has also contented himself with observing and defining "forces" and "tendencies," with the play of which he is loth to interfere. The very latest of these tendencies, however, is a desire humanely to dominate the temporal flow of things and thought, and this is why the humanists, who do have a programme, are now winning the ear of intellectuals old and young. The latest tendency therefore gives some ground for hope that in another generation we shall be less absorbed in tendencies. When that time arrives we shall be able to restore in the American university the alliance of scholarship and criticism, or, in the words of Emile Legouis, the alliance of the two types of criticism — the erudite and the literary.

Norman Foerster

BOOK REVIEWS

CYCLES IN POETRY

THE CYCLE OF MODERN POETRY. *A Series of Essays Toward Clearing our Present Poetic Dilemma. By G. R. Elliott. Princeton. Princeton University Press.* 1929. $2.50.

Matthew Arnold once said "the English poetry of the first quarter of this century, with plenty of energy, plenty of creative force, did not know enough. This makes Byron so empty of matter, Shelley so incoherent, Wordsworth even, profound as he is, yet so wanting in completeness and variety." Mr. T. S. Eliot, reminding us of this statement, remarked that it would probably be as true of the first quarter of the twentieth century as of the nineteenth. Professor G. R. Elliott, whether intentionally or not, has written a book which may stand as a demonstration of these *dicta*. In a series of essays dealing with Shelley, Keats, Byron, Arnold as a poet, Longfellow, Browning, Whitman (as contrasted with Longfellow and compared with Browning) and Hardy he has analyzed the thought and motive ideas of nineteenth-century poetry. In two concluding essays, one on Robert Frost, the other entitled "Milton and the Present State of Poetry," he has treated twentieth-century poetry as a completion of the cycle that started with Wordsworth, and he has pointed to a possible way out of what he considers the present poetic *impasse*.

It would be well to note the limitations which Professor Elliott has imposed upon himself. His book has no point of contact, for example, with the recent book by Professor Grierson which treats of the same period. Professor Elliott is not interested in the sensibility, the diction, the "form" of nineteenth-century poetry. He invests the word "poetry" with a high seriousness, stripping it of what he would consider mere "aesthetic" connotations. His book is slightly parallel to chapters IV and VI of Mr. Herbert Read's *Phases of Poetry*. But again Professor Elliott's attention is focussed upon a narrower field. He is interested almost exclusively in the ethical implications of a

poet's work, in the "moral imagination" of a poet, and what he reports of the struggle in life between good and evil.

In the essays upon individual poets there is much that is pleasant and instructive. The analysis of the quality of Shelley's emotion is felicitous and precise. A very convincing graph is plotted of Keats's intellectual growth, and the essay should do much to check the still growing nonsense (witness the review in the *Times Literary Supplement* for April 18 of M. Lucien Wolff's book on Keats) about Keats, the "philosopher." There is a just appreciation of Hardy's *Dynasts*, which, as Professor Elliott complains, is too much neglected for his slighter lyrics. The essay upon Robert Frost fits that idiosyncratic poet accurately into the frame of contemporary poetry. But the essay which most commands one reader's admiration is the one on Longfellow. It is not too much to say that Professor Elliott completely demolishes the Longfellow myth. By apt quotation and by a right insistence upon Longfellow as a necessary complement to Whitman in the growth of the American spirit he shows that Longfellow has been the most serious American poet and the one whose successful accomplishments in handling such themes as home or death make him most worthy of our attention.

It is perhaps unjust to Professor Elliott to pass thus hastily over what is the larger part of his book and in which there is so much both to please and to instruct, in order to concentrate upon the final chapter where one finds material for disagreement. Yet the chapter on "Milton and the Present State of Poetry" is intended by him as the most important section of the book, and the validity of the conclusions there reached must determine in great measure the validity of the general thesis which informs the entire work.

Subscription to that thesis in its large extent is easy and compulsory. The poetic mind of our day is "still caught in the dying orbit of the nineteenth century mind." The ideas and formative thought of Carl Sandburg, Edgar Lee Masters, and the imagists are bequests from Wordsworth, Shelley and the 'nineties. The most serious — the fatal — legacy is the monism of Romantic ethical thought. The consequent flabbiness of our moral imagination prevents our attaining "that central region of the Elizabethan dramatic imagination," the region in which one records the struggle between good and evil. Professor Elliott's philosophy is very similar to the humanism of Professors

Babbitt and More, and it would be correct to say that the great service of his book is the application of that doctrine to nineteenth-century poetry. One of the reasons for our dissatisfaction with that poetry is at last well defined and documented. The mere fact that these essays form a single book gives them greater value than that of the fragments scattered through volumes of Shelburne essays.

Formally this book might have been better if a prefatory essay upon Wordsworth expounding the tenets of the doctrine to be set forth had been used as an introduction, instead of that poet receiving only a sub-heading in the final chapter. Such an essay might have led the author to examine one aspect of Wordsworth's thought to which he pays no attention, the aspect shown in the patriotic sonnets. It might be a tenable theory that the successors of Wordsworth suffered most, not from their devotion to that poet, but from the fact that that devotion was to an incomplete Wordsworth. Furthermore Professor Elliott handles his modern poets rather gingerly and in such a way as to provoke a lack of confidence in his full acquaintance with them. Imagism receives some attention, and a dead horse is well flogged. But the other poets he mentions, Masefield, Lindsay, Lola Ridge, W. W. Gibson, have little or no interest to the student of modern poetry. One wishes that he had chosen for analysis and comment work of more significance, the poetry of Hart Crane, for example, or *The Waste Land*.

With these minor fault-findings one can accept Professor Elliott's thesis, considered as analysis. It is open to anyone to object that the book should be entitled "The Cycle of Ethical Thought in Modern Poetry" and that a fairer judgment of these poets would be obtained by viewing them in a context other than the moral one, but such objections are completely beside the point. The application of the humanist touchstone to these poets was something that had to be done and that application has demonstrated what we had begun to suspect: that the quality of the moral imagination in the successors of Wordsworth is very low.

It is when Professor Elliott prescribes a remedy that disagreement commences. If it were simply a question of what classic poet should be read by young poets the quarrel would be silly. But the extraordinarily high praise awarded to Milton, as the sole English poet whose spirit is capable of saving the modern poetic mind, leads one to

think that Professor Elliott has misconceived Milton and, what is most important, has a confused and inadequate theory of the spiritual needs of our civilization.

Confused, because there would appear to be a discrepancy between the religion which animates *Paradise Lost* and the humanism which Professor Elliott has invoked as a guide for his analysis of recent poetry. This discrepancy which is probably real as well as apparent is nowhere investigated. Professor Elliott is perhaps not "irrevocably committed to the modern experiment," but we have a right to inquire what the religion is which we are being urged to adopt. In the whole effect of *Paradise Lost* the ethical insight of Milton cannot be dissociated from his religious premises. Milton was writing, not a moral drama, but a religious poem, to justify the ways of God to man. If we are to regard it merely as a "symbolical epic" will we not lose what is the moving power and the very foundation of the moral imagination of Milton, a set of beliefs about God?

It may be that morality is impossible without religion. If that is so, we must cease to be humanists, in the sense in which Professor Babbitt uses the word. The religion that will be ours in that case can hardly be the harsh and unlovely Protestantism of Milton. We might accept Professor Elliott's enthusiastic praise of Milton's ethical discernment in terms usually reserved for Sophocles, but it is impossible to accept a statement such as this: "That power [which is] the foundation of what is greatest in English and American literature, and deserving the full homage of our *imagination,* is called Puritanism." One has no desire to run at this word like a bull at a red flag, as Mr. Mencken does, but surely the religion and morality of Puritanism are amply discredited by their fruits. One need not mention obvious things like Cromwell's army of murderers; it is more interesting to note that a recent historian discovers in the religion of the Commonwealth an ancestor of pernicious modern rationalism. Mr. Esmé Wingfield-Stratford's description of what he terms the "spiritual bolshevism" of the Puritan era makes one skeptical of help coming from that quarter. Although Professor Elliott selects for special commendation that element of *Paradise Lost* which is least characteristic of its time, the figure of the Son of God, he does not convince us that the Messiah is the protagonist of the poem. The God the Father whom Professor Elliott wisely ignores is all too prominent when one

reads the poem itself. Milton's religion is implicated in his morality and prevents that morality from being the vital inspiration to the present age that Professor Elliott would have it be, no matter how serious our desire for moral guidance is.

It is precisely our moral seriousness which makes us reject Milton's moral insight as inadequate. There is a solemnity about the struggle between Satan and the helpers of God. But there is also "a dazzling disregard of the human soul," as a recent critic has noted. The contest is symbolical, perhaps, but symbolical and non-human. The fighting forces become abstractions, labels, having relations to humanity only in the eyes of sectarians. The revivified moral imagination of the modern poet will come not from Milton, but from a study of the more serious Shakespeare, whom Professor Elliott rejects, or of the metaphysical poets, whom he so unaccountably finds "poetically turgid." Their moral insight is more serious than Milton's because it is more studious of human beings and because it was founded upon a religion that embodied a sweeter and older tradition. In any case the arrogance and haughty pride of a Milton are not the products of the sweet reasonableness that one expects of the humanist.

One suspects that this question of the proper "curriculum" for the modern poet is not to be solved solely by an examination of the moral qualities of past writings. If one is convinced that somehow or other the magical word "humanism" is to solve such difficulties one must be careful lest new humanism be old Puritanism (or old Victorianism) writ large. One feels like insisting that there are other traditions embodied in English literature besides that of Puritanism, traditions which incorporate as great or greater moral imagination, traditions such as Catholicism, or, what could not be precisely termed tradition, manifestations of Primitive Christianity. Or it is possible to wear one's Puritanism with a difference as Spenser did, whose poetry is perhaps most worthy to be entitled humanist. Surely Professor Elliott is correct in saying that contemporary poetry suffers from an exclusive attention to romantic thought; but equally surely the corrective is opposition, almost in any form, creating the clash of traditions from which comes culture. The poetry of manners and enlightenment of the eighteenth century with which Professor Elliott has no sympathy would serve better than Milton. Whatever one's conclusion, however, one is grateful to Professor Elliott for his careful exposition of one of the sources of the errors that infect our poetry.

LAWRENCE LEIGHTON

THE POETRY OF MALCOLM COWLEY

BLUE JUNIATA. *By Malcolm Cowley. New York. Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith.* $2.00.

This book covers a period of something more than ten years, and its less successful poems might serve as an outline history of the fashions that have risen and fallen during that period. This is not to its credit. For the styles so adopted have been in nearly every case adopted from the outside with little or no awareness of their organic causes, and they have seldom been mastered. The earliest poems are Laforguian: *Nocturne,* for instance, is almost a paraphrase of Laforgue's *Complainte des Pianos*; it embodies the decidedly unsatisfactory adolescent emotion that is the basis of all of Laforgue's work but not the two great Laforguian virtues of style — speed and rhythmic outline. The *Complainte des Pianos* has the dazzling rapidity of a first-rate xylophone performance: *Nocturne* is slow and limp. *Deathbed,* however, a poem of about the same time, escapes the influences of the period and offers a very curious and well-handled emotion. If the first nineteen lines of *Angelica* could be condensed into two or three, one would have another poem nearly as good. The poem does not get started until the twentieth line; from there on it has form and precision; but before that point it is vague, aimless, and reminiscent of that Laforguian pastiche of Mr. Eliot's, *A Portrait of a Lady.*

Mr. Cowley, having drifted through the Dada days of *Broom,* with a few interesting experiments and a few sound lines, seems to have returned to his native countryside for inspiration, and we have as a result the first section in the book, though some of these poems antedate the rest by several years. The group has a charming feeling as a whole, interesting passages, and perhaps three poems — *The Hill above the Mine, Chestnut Ridge,* and *Laurel Mountain* — that are successful throughout. They share one quality with the more or less similarly sentimental poetry of Francis Jammes: the group as a whole is more moving than any of its parts, the reason being a kind

of stylistic dilution of an emotion that is nevertheless quite genuine of its kind, so that the poetry never permits of very close scrutiny at any given point. Mr. Cowley allows himself, for instance, many such unorganized catalogues and progressions as the following:

> only the bones of a house,
> lilacs growing beside them,
> roses in clumps between them,
> honeysuckle over;
> a door, a crooked chimney,
> mud-chinked, a yawning fireplace,
> the skeleton of a pine.

That he is capable of firmer writing is proved by the graceful synthesis that follows:

> I heard a railroad section hand playing on a jew's-harp,
> *Where is now that merry party I remember long ago?*
> *Nelly was a lady* . . . twice . . . *Old Black Joe,*
> as if he laid a hand upon my shoulder,
> saying:
> "Your father lived here long ago;
> your father's father built the house, lies buried
> under the pine —"
> Sing *Nelly was a lady*
> *Blue Juniata* . . . *Old Black Joe.*

This passage, incidentally, is probably the taking-off point for a similar passage in *The River,* by Hart Crane.

The more recent poems are for me the most interesting and deserve less reserved praise. *Leonora* is adroit and amusing to a high degree, and *Tumbling Mustard,* the perfection, perhaps, of the same mood, is one of the lovliest, most amusing, and most skillful songs of our time. The meter, especially in the fifth line of each stanza, is astonishingly fine and astonishingly witty. In one of the more serious poems there is this slightly vague grandiloquence by way of a final statement:

> But you shall hear the thunder
> of bursting walls; the gates of night swing wide,
> and journeys will be set against the sunrise;
> your path shall be the empty streets of air.

This is an apparently satisfactory answer to a man who is "waiting without patience to be filled with God." The last stanza of *Tumbling Mustard* says the same thing but evaluates its content more accurately:

Tumbleweed, tumbleweed,
riding his velocipede
east side, west side,
all around the moon;
Denver, San Francisco, Winnipeg and Dallas, maybe if
the gas holds out we'll get there soon.

This piece might easily pass for a poetic summary of the first three-fourths of Mr. Cowley's career as one has it in the present volume.

In addition, *There Is a Moment* is perfectly written and wholly admirable; *William Wilson* is firm and closely organized; and *The Lady from Harlem* is perhaps better than any of these. It is mainly in these poems and in *Deathbed* that the author is endeavoring to study and master himself; elsewhere he too often seems to be seeking some vague salvation in an attempt to reflect his age, or something else, occasionally Laforgue and Eliot; or, as a sort of nostalgic but apparently no better justified alternative, his section of Pennsylvania. He is, on the strength of these, one of the eight or ten most distinguished poets of his generation; he might become, proceeding from these, something more. I quote *The Lady from Harlem* (In Memory of Florence Mills) entire:

The fetish-woman crossed the stage,
her limbs convulsed with yellow magic.
Art is the gratuitous
shiver that makes the shimmy tragic.
Obeah, obeah, wailed the saxophones.

Though orchestras play Dixie Dreams,
never in Dixie field was picked
the gun-cotton that swells your breast,
explodes and leaves me derelict
amid the wreckage of your smile,

floating over the parterre.
Your sudden fingers touched my wrist.
Tell me, did Madam Walker do your hair
before she died in Tarrytown
among her butlers, footmen, chefs?

Throned on a tomb of brass you reign
between the bass and treble clefs.

This is finely felt and closely written; it is an organic, not a sought and theoretically correct emotion. It is to be hoped that its author is aware of its virtues, relative as well as absolute.

YVOR WINTERS

THREE REFORMERS

THREE REFORMERS: LUTHER, DESCARTES, ROUSSEAU. *By Jacques Maritain. New York. Charles Scribner's Sons.* 1929. $2.50.

This book is an analysis of the "great wild revolutionary work, from Protestantism downwards," which has prepared "nonsense pure and simple as its blessedest result." Its purpose is to vindicate the claim of the New Scholasticism that the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas "does not wish to be the philosophy of a historical age, but rather the constantly progressive philosophy of humanity, and that it is for this reason that it is traditional."

Luther is taken as "the prototype of modern times." He is studied primarily not as the founder of a new institution, but as "the first great Romantic." In Luther's personal history is found the "ébauche" of the whole disastrous Protestant apostasy. As a "religious" he worked madly for perfection, but being unable to experience pureness of grace he decided that God commanded the impossible when he gave us His law. Instead of losing himself in God and partaking of the divine personality, he went spiritually bankrupt and announced that "concupiscence is unconquerable." (M. Maritain interprets concupiscence as physical lust, although Luther meant it to apply to every kind of temptation toward selfish desire.) For the supersensuous insight of the contemplative life and its resulting virtues, he substituted the *consolations sensibles*, a phrase which the translator erroneously renders "sensible consolations" — that is, the *feeling* that he was in a state of grace and sinlessness. His was a mystical heresy in which the feelings were primary. Works (by which Luther meant both ethical and ritualistic works) are futile. Faith alone must suffice.

Along with this "solifidianism," to use Matthew Arnold's term, went a bold attack on reason. Where reason is debased, and where faith is against reason, the will becomes supreme. For Luther, this meant determinism in theory, but in practice, the man (Luther) whose piety is a feeling of sinlessness, though he goes on sinning, as a human creature "raises its crest and manages very well in the mud

in which it was plunged by Adam's sin. This creature will get straight in the world, it will follow the will to power, the imperialistic instinct, it will work *its will* in the world." The last stage of such a progression is the principle of immanence. Liberty, grace, inwardness, spirit are turned into illusions. Liberty which should bring man peace through delight in the law of virtue puts him under bondage to his own sensations and desires. Grace, instead of transforming his character, simply changes the red figures in the celestial ledgers to black figures. Luther's sins are laid on Christ and Christ's virtues are accredited to Luther. Thus, resigning himself to his "unconquerable concupiscence" and "sinning on bravely,"[1] though riding on Christ's back in faith, he gradually becomes a vicious "riot in flesh and blood." And this was the "reformation"! The "Christ in us" of Luther's theology is in reality only a theory and a feeling. Evidence of this is furnished, with chapter and verse, for Protestants who may be sceptical. The effect of heresy upon his personal features is shown by a series of portraits, included in the volume, "the last of which are surprisingly bestial." "The Protestant reformation was only the effect of an interior trial which turned out badly in a 'religious' who lacked humility."

Under state control the spirit of Luther is quickly suppressed in Germany, but it "takes the offensive again in Lessing and it carries all before it with Rousseau." Whether it was Luther's obscurantism, his determinism, his principle of immanence, or his personal viciousness, that was revived by Lessing is not pointed out. Perhaps we need not be told that it was Lessing's assertion of the right of private judgment and reason. In that case, he would hardly be a disciple of Luther. The fact is, the principle which Luther has come to represent was not one championed as such by him, namely, refusal to accept uncritically the dictates of authority.

J. Maritain has shown with great skill, the "Lutheranism" of Jean Jacques! Rousseau's reform accomplished a work in the sphere of natural morality of the same type as Luther's in the realm of grace. At first glance, the theory of natural goodness would seem to be the exact opposite of Luther's assertion of irresistible concupiscence but as a matter of practice they both yield to the flesh. Luther looks to Jesus as the author and finisher of his good works and as the scape-

[1] "*Pecca fortiter et crede firmius,*" a phrase used by Luther in a letter to Melanchthon.

goat for his bad works. Rousseau blames society for his vices and accepts his temperament as God-given. They both "sin on bravely," Luther because his "concupiscence is unconquerable," Rousseau because he must be sincerely himself. Keep your mind and feelings on Christ and "everything happens of itself and everything you do is good," says Luther. Rousseau resists no allurement, but surrenders to his natural propensities with his eyes ever on the ideal. "The Milesians are not really stupid people; they only act like stupid people." These two reformers according to M. Maritain, through the intoxication of feelings about themselves make the philosophy of drift seem to be true sanctity. He has forgotten, however, that Luther depreciated human nature in order to exalt God and that for Luther good works are the inevitable result and the sign of true faith. He does, however, admit (and fail to explain why) the Lutherans have been the most puritanical of the Protestant sects. Nevertheless, he finds in both Reformers, in equal measure, anti-intellectualism, hypocrisy, loss of humility and grace which transforms life, the principle of immanence, the absorption of God into the self, identification of the divine with the individual's feelings and will, reliance upon an emotional conscience, and as a result, the restlessness of disintegrated personality and of a salvation attempted without work, and, most of all, sensuality.

Agreeing with M. Seillière, but following more closely the Jesuit, Hartmann Grisar, the author accuses Rousseau of debasing Christianity, a laicising of mysticism, partially through the influence of Mme. de Warens, who is therefore called the "mamma" of Romanticism, a title she has hardly won. The real sin of Jean Jacques, says M. Maritain, was the "mimicry of sanctity" and the cause of his success and influence (and of Luther's) was the way in which, under the guise of a saint, he confused or debased the key words or concepts of the moral and spiritual vocabulary: nature, mysticism, solitude, faith, sincerity, conscience, confession, grace, liberty, equality. Generally speaking, although there are many sound distinctions to be found in connection with the meanings of these general terms, especially of solitude, mysticism and nature, any reader of Irving Babbitt or Paul Elmer More will find little that is new.

The Descartes essay is brilliant and the best in the book. As Luther discovered the Human Person and Jean Jacques Nature and Liberty,

Descartes discovered Thought. His sin is "angelism," a term which deserves a popularity equal to Benda's "Belphegorism." An "angelist" is one who simulates the power of direct intuition, independent of things, a power which belongs only to the angels. "Angelic cognition is intuitive as to its mode, innate as to its origin, and independent of things as to its nature." Descartes' first effort is to throw off the burden of discursive reasoning and to achieve vision by direct method. Interior conviction is the criterion of truth; hence, judgment belongs ultimately to the will and not to the understanding. Error arises from the same cause as the fall of the angels, pride of intellect and precipitancy of judgment. It is a weakness of the free will and a judging beyond what is perceived clearly and distinctly. Thus Descartes pulls down the blinds, shuts out external objects and fabricates a structure of clear ideas almost instantaneously. He needs neither the help of others nor concrete forms, for he believes his ideas come from God like angelic ideas and not from objects. By a theory of representation and of divine integrity, thought and being are identified, all knowledge is levelled to a single type of certitude and finally the judgment of other men, the heritage of the past, unclear and indistinct ideas, poetry and everything that is not mathematically evident are excluded. Actually, then, Descartes separates rather than identifies thought and being. The angel incarnate has descended to subhuman cognition. The humanities, positive and moral studies, history and erudition are held in contempt. Thence arises the obsession for method, the domination of the physical universe becomes the soul's good, and "the mechanical explanation becomes the only conceivable scientific explanation."

One might wish that the author had dealt more in detail with the Cartesian concept of substance as an aspect of "angelism." All in all, the essay is one of the briefest, and yet one of the most comprehensive of recent studies of Descartes, an essay worthy of many rereadings.

And yet, the reason, perhaps, for the superiority of the Descartes essay may be that in the other studies M. Maritain is himself an "angelist." Besides the limitation of his method, a limitation which is unavoidable if one would write history and translate it into ideas,[2]

[2] As E. Gilson remarks, the danger of M. Maritain's method of dealing with the history of thought is that "*sous sa main, les philosophes deviennent des thèses abstraites. . . . Cette manière de voir n'est pas sans présenter quelques incon-*

the author has the overweening fervor of a convert to *the* Faith and *the* Philosophy which he believes to be the only remedy for a world gone astray. In the interpretation of Luther as a transmitter of obscurantism, voluntarism, immanence and charity corrupted into humanitarianism, M. Maritain has much that is sound and worthy of repetition. But in his treatment of Luther as a man and a Protestant he has descended to a type of muck-raking that many Catholics will resent. Since he felt it necessary to deal with controversial biographical material, it is to be regretted that he did not draw his information and interpretations from historians like Janssen and Pastor, who, though "defenders of the Faith," do not believe that the Catholic Church has come to such a pass as to need calumny. Maritain, the "angelist," has allowed his stock of clear and distinct ideas, no doubt also from God, to furnish him with an erroneous theory of the cause of Luther's apostasy, and likewise of the Reformation, for the confirmation of which isolated facts, well-attested to be sure, suggestions and portraits are marshalled together to prove that the Reformer "gathered sensuality everywhere" and was a "bestial," "vicious disposition." There are three main theses which have separated M. Maritain from the facts, one derived from the Dominican Friar, Heinrich Denifle,[3] and the other two from the Jesuit Professor at Innsbruck, Hartmann Grisar.[4] From Denifle, he takes, beside most of his facts, the general principle of the Inquisition, "that no one has ever become a recreant to the true faith unless he had previously become a wicked man. Every departure from the doctrine of the one holy and apostolic Church must be traceable to some mental or moral depravity on the part of the erring person." From Grisar, he appropriates two explanations of Luther and Lutheranism: first, Luther's "ever-increasing, uncontrollable self-concern, developing as time went on into a fatal self-assertion, a contempt of all authority except such as he could turn to the support of his own individual con-

vénients, car en fait les penseurs soumis à une telle critique ne reconnaîtraient jamais leur pensée sous la forme schématique à laquelle elle se trouve réduite et ceux qui lisent ces mêmes penseurs ne la reconnaissent pas davantage." F. Lefevre, *Une heure avec . . .*, p. 71.

[3] *Luther und Lutherthum in der ersten Entwickelung*, von P. Heinrich Denifle, O. P., 1904-1909.

[4] *Luther*, von Hartmann Grisar, S. J., 3 Bde. Freiburg im Breisgau, 1911.

clusions. Having through his own perversity come to certain conclusions, he then found, or wished others to think he had found, support in the undoubted foundations of Christian tradition;" second, Luther's "Morbid sensitiveness to imagined spiritual suggestion," "a false mysticism which overemphasizes the individual process of reaching religious satisfaction through personal, spiritual communion with the source of all spiritual certainty." The justice of these three theses cannot be entered into here.[5] The English historian G. P. Gooch has described Denifle's book, which is quoted at great length by M. Maritain, as "eight hundred pages hurled at the memory of the Reformer, and among the most repulsive books in historical literature."

As to the pictures of the "surprisingly bestial" Luther, found in this volume: no other reason but malice can be adduced to explain the selection of the loathsome portrait "Luther Dead" by Lucas Fortnagel instead of the picture painted by Lucas Cranach in the year Luther died. In fact, it is only the Fortnagel portrait which warrants the phrase "surprisingly bestial."

Moreover, M. Maritain's "angelism" has made him silent, not blind, as to the material causality (to use one of his favorite phrases) of the Reformation. Even Mr. Chesterton admits that no man knows enough to be always wrong. Luther found a Church which was carrying on a profitable business of relic-worship, masses for the dead, miracles, pilgrimages and indulgences.[6] He found also a theology which was the blessed result of scholasticism. The former he succeeded in abolishing, that is, for Protestantism. As to the latter, he simply came down on the other side of the horse.

But misinterpretations of certain aspects of Luther's life must not be cause for underestimating this important book. It is written by a great philosopher and an artist, a man who has seen deep into the darkness visible of modern individualism. The problem that has been bequeathed to us by the three Reformers is not one that "Martinus Eleutherius" would have dealt with as a "modern," but it is one that was inevitable since the Catholic Church was a divine institution

[5] For a discussion of the flood of literature brough forth by Denifle and Grisar see *Harvard Theological Review*, April, 1914, vol. vii, No. 2, page 203, Ephraim Emerton, *Martin Luther in the Light of Recent Criticism.*

[6] Denifle describes the corrupt conditions existing within the Church in great detail in order to show the decadence of mind and soul which Luther typifies.

under human control. M. Maritain reminds us that the problem of liberty is the chief problem of humanity, and, incidentally, of his book. He offers as the solution the "intelligence" and love and truth, and a willingness to learn from others, which being translated means, besides other things, St. Thomas and the Catholic Church, which is no solution at all except for the "antimodern." "Only in the Church is Christianity a living thing." Certainly the "modern" must discover and impose upon himself a standard less fluctuating and "angelistic" than his reason or his feelings about himself, whether he be a humanist or a religious man or both. But he cannot admit that sound autonomy is heteronomy.

The translation is adequate, although it does not follow the original faithfully throughout.

James Luther Adams

THE EXTASIE

DONNE THE CRAFTSMAN. *An essay upon the structure of the* Songs and Sonets. *By Pierre Legouis. Paris. Henri Didier.* 1928. (*New York. Oxford University Press.* 1929. $1.00.)

"I propose," says M. Legouis (pp. 10, 11), "to insist on one aspect of Donne's talent which seems to have been overlooked or at least insufficiently recognized. More than justice has been done to his earnestness on the one hand, to his extensive and thorough acquaintance with medieval philosophy on the other hand, but the transmutation of both personal experience and recondite learning into lyrical poetry has not been paid its due share of attention. . . . Is it possible, without going back to classical standards, to test the poetry of Donne, neither as an outburst of feeling nor as a produce [*sic*] of the intellect that deals in abstractions (both of which it undoubtedly is), but for the nonce merely as the work of a gifted, restless, unequal, yet highly conscious craftsman? . . . Aim, purpose, intention is what I am primarily concerned with, though I may pass judgments, secondarily, on the quality of the art, or craftsmanship, or technique, three words which I shall not distinguish." This admirable purpose M. Legouis carries out by an examination of the *Songs and Sonets* in three categories.

First, he studies Donne's use of stanza forms. After enumerating in a convenient table (pp. 14 to 16) the stanzas employed in the *Songs and Sonets*, and commenting on the technical difficulties imposed by their complicated pattern, he attempts an analysis of the success with which Donne is able to reproduce this pattern in the stanzas that follow. This analysis leads to the conclusion that "In many, if not in most, of the *Songs and Sonets*, an initial outburst of feeling soon subsides into dialectics, a change which I ascribe to the difficulty of reproducing deliberately the complex arrangement of a spontaneous first stanza." (p. 33.) Donne's poetry, considered thus, "parades its freedom from tradition up to a certain point chiefly to enhance the value of its strict subjugation afterwards to its own new-made laws. When it seems to have given itself most rope, it proves to have tied itself tightest." (p. 34.)

Second, he studies the matter of the poems, in contradistinction to the metrical form. By analyzing several poems, he demonstrates how strictly Donne has disciplined his thought. These analyses lead to the conclusions "that there is a close relation between the artistic structure and the logical import of his lyrics, and that form not seldom seems to command matter." (pp. 46, 47.)

Third, to confute the objections "that such form is logical rather than artistic, and that Donne is more of a schoolman than a poet when he delights in symmetrical constructions" (p. 47), M. Legouis proceeds to show that "in several at least of the *Songs and Sonets*, logic is subordinate to another element which I shall call the dramatic" (p. 47), defining the term as implying the presence of a second character. When the "effect produced on the speaking character by the presence of a listening one, whom he tries to persuade and win over" (p. 50) is considered, "What seemed at first disinterested dialectics, indulged in for truth's sake, . . . sounds quite differently . . ." (p. 50). To the support of this contention he adduces the four *Valedictions*, — *of my name, in the window*, — *of the booke*, — *of weeping*, and — *forbiding mourning*; other similar poems, *Sweetest love I do not goe*, *Breake of day*, *The Sunne Rising*, *The good-morrow*; and finally analyzes in more detail *The Canonization*, *The Exstasie*, *The Flea* and *The Dreame*. The section closes with a comparison, more extended than Professor Grierson's, to Browning's dramatic poems.

As a conclusion to his study as a whole, M. Legouis asserts that "Donne cared for art, or, to put it more unexceptionably, he was interested in technique. His life, at least his youth during which he wrote the most of the *Songs and Sonets*, was wild, whether we consider the lover or the thinker in him; but when he set to indite a love-poem, or vent in verse a theory on the problems of sexual morality, he composed himself and looked about for literary devices to improve his theme; or, if the first stanza of a piece shaped itself while his blood was still hot, he had to cool down before he proceeded to copy its metrical design accurately in the second and third stanzas." (p. 80.)

M. Legouis agrees with Professor Grierson in guarding against "the literalism that sees 'an actual experience behind every sincere poem.'" (p. 80.) But he cannot agree with Professor Grierson in

believing that one may discover in any group of Donne's poems his philosophy of complete love (see Professor Grierson's edition, Vol. II, p. xlv). "This essay tries to show that what earnestness there is in *The Songs and Sonets* often belongs, not to the poet himself, but to the character he presents, and to the situation in which he places this character." (p. 82.)

Particularly startling to most readers will be M. Legouis's interpretation of *The Exstasie* as built about a "seducer's scheme." (p. 67.) ". . . in not a few of the *Songs and Sonets* the barrister pleads disingenuously indeed, but earnestly enough, because he pleads for himself, not before an academic jury of literary connoisseurs, but with the one woman whom he loves for the nonce. Persuading her to yield is the practical reason which decides upon the lover's choice of arguments and manner of presenting them." (pp. 71, 72.) Accordingly, in *The Exstasie* Donne leads from the description of the pregnant bank ("The epithet 'pregnant', though not voluptuous, is also sexual, and the drooping violets suggest languor." p. 62) and from the hands "firmly cimented / With a fast balme, which thence did spring" (M. Legouis, p. 62, compares Othello's "young and sweating devil"), through the meeting of two souls in Platonic purity, through subtle flattery and analogy, to "the point and says what he has been thinking all the time,

> But O alas, so long, so farre
> Our bodies why doe wee forbeare?" (p. 66.)

The hypothetical listener bears witness to "the ennobling quality of the scene." (p. 63.) The conclusion is triumphantly cynical. ". . . the final line of the second part repeats, with some variation, the last line of the first part: 'no change' becomes 'small change,' the difference between the two terms representing what the man has won and the woman lost." (p. 68.)

It is perhaps this last rendering which is among several others[1] most open to question. To the true-born Englishman to whom M. Legouis

[1] Is it not possible to discover a solution for the difficulty M. Legouis finds (pp. 65, 66) between "But as all severall soules containe / Mixture of things, they know not what," and "For th' Atomies of which we grow, / Are soules, . "? Again, is there a significance in the use of *we* which M. Legouis's interpretation does not utilize? I raise both questions without being able to answer them satisfactorily. Neither of them challenges his interpretation, but concerns the course of the argument only.

elsewhere (p. 88, note) defers, "small change" presents a negation if anything more emphatic than "no change." This more likely rendering, however, does no injury to M. Legouis's interpretation.

Despite such minor weaknesses, which only captious criticism would make important, M. Legouis's interpretation, startling as it may be, must, nevertheless, be acknowledged plausible. Indeed, one of its most startling features is the revelation of how suspiciously subjective one's reasons are for regarding the poem as an attempt "to state and vindicate the relation of soul and body." (Grierson, ed., Vol. II, xlvii.) Every objective argument in favor of this latter interpretation serves quite as well, or even better, in support of M. Legouis's.

By his demonstration of the dramatic element in many of Donne's *Songs and Sonets*, M. Legouis has exposed the unwarranted assumptions by which a romantic criticism, unfortunately still in vogue, has sought to connect the poem and the poet. This book does much to place the study of Donne's poetry on a firmer basis. Certainly no critic can in the future neglect its findings.

M. Legouis's study concludes with two appendices. The first considers the application of Gray's comment that "Dr. Donne (in his *Satires*) observes no regularity in the feet of his verse, only the number of syllables is equal throughout." The second appendix advances cogent arguments against Professor Grierson's conjecture that certain poems were written to Mrs. Herbert.

M. Legouis's publishers might well have done him the honor of printing his valuable study in some form less slovenly than the present volume.

JOHN MARSHALL

SHORTER NOTICES

No Love. *By David Garnett. New York. Alfred A. Knopf.* 1929. $2.50.

If we take it as granted that Mr. Garnett's prose is pleasant both to the ear and the mind and that he employs in this, his latest novel, the same welcome talent for avoiding waste places that freshened his earlier books, there remains still an interesting enough matter for mention: what *kind* of a novel has he written? What *kind* of a content has it?

No Love is not, for example, very like anything by Henry James. The novels James worked most on were often intended to show the awakening of some single character to the nature and conditions of his or her own life: so with Strether in *The Ambassadors*, and so with Isabelle Archer in *The Portrait of A Lady*. The predicament of character was fatal and the solution was secured when the "sacred rage" of consciousness made that fate manifest. The exposition of such an awakening formed what Ramon Fernandez would call the moral progress of the novel; and it consisted, finally, in the integration of a character. I do not mean that James painfully manufactured people of integrity — who very frequently are not integrated at all. It is not a question of totalled virtue but of the quality of being.

Mr. Garnett begins in something the same way. He is busy with the process of his characters becoming conscious of their condition, and the predicament in which they are discovered is certainly fatal. But what he finally does to his characters is quite different. It is more like what happens to the people in Huxley's *Point Counterpoint* (with the exception of Spandrell) or the people in Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*. The characters are compelled to recognize that they cannot be integrated. Or put the other way round the conditions of their lives are such that, being made intensely aware of them, they can only judge those conditions, and so necessarily themselves, in a kind of moral disintegration. That is what happens to Benedict and Simon in *No Love*. It would evidently, in Mr. Garnett's view, not have been what happened, had he cared to portray it, to Benedict's father, Roger, who died whole.

In this connection the juxtaposition of announced theme and final resolution is interesting. The theme is from a sermon by Donne: "S. BASIL says, he saw an oxe weepe for the death of his yoke-fellow; but S. BASIL might mistake the occasion of that oxes teares." The resolution, the last paragraph of the book, is Benedict's final judgment on his friend Simon and is also as the theme suggests his unknowing judgment upon himself: "It's because there's No Love. No Love in his heart. He has never learned what it is from other people. That's the explanation. No Love."

The notion of the book is that it is impossible for these people to learn what love is from others or from themselves. There is the suspicion of an unspoken myth that had they learned love they would not have so horribly failed as human beings. It is possible that Mr. Garnett may have unintentionally confused himself with St. Basil.[1] The disintegration into which Benedict and Simon fall is, almost apparently, due to other causes: the war and the tone of post-war times — when if English society was not itself disrupted at least the individual soul lost its principle of unity. Among novelists and many publicists disintegration of the spirit has become the studied interest of the age. Sometimes it is called a disease. Sometimes it is argued to represent a stretch of consciouness: as if a permanent condition of the spirit had been unearthed.

At any rate the prevalence of such an attitude among the more actively honest novelists has made a great difference in the treatment of character. The suffering of Isabelle Archer is given entirely — a perfect thing — because the whole weight of the book is to make her aware of her whole life, of life itself, integrated in her mind. The tragedy of Benedict and Simon in *No Love* fails to hang together not only because their lives cannot be integrated but also because the narrative, being anecdotal, cannot be integrated either. Their story is none the less poignant for that; it is literally too true to life.

[1] Yet Arnold Bennett after reading *Point Counterpoint* "comes to the conclusion that Jesus may have preached the Sermon on the Mount in vain." (*The Realist*. Vol. I, no. 1, p. 11.)

R. P. Blackmur

SHORTER NOTICES

SARAH ORNE JEWETT. *By Francis Otto Matthiessen. Boston. Houghton Mifflin Company.* 1929. $3.00.

Mr. Matthiessen has achieved a singularly appropriate biography. To delineate the character and career of a major writer requires deep resources of intellectual energy; to treat a minor writer calls for subtlety and an uncompromising sense of proportion. Mr. Matthiessen has made his book the right length, selected for it the right technique, given it the right tone, and discovered — after some preliminary uncertainties — the right style.

As biography the book is admirable, solving without recourse to high coloring the problem of making interesting so uneventful a life as Miss Jewett's. As a critical study also, it has its virtues — an intelligent sympathy with Miss Jewett's type of imagination and an unpretentious understanding of the refinements of her style. But, despite these virtues, Mr. Matthiessen as critic is less satisfactory than he is as biographer. He clearly defines neither the qualities which make Miss Jewett's better books so moving and so nearly great nor the limitations which so unmistakably establish their position this side of greatness.

In the closing paragraph of the book we read that *The Country of the Pointed Firs* makes us dream. There is, surely, more to be said than that. The local color novel has been predominant in our literature because our novelists have wanted either the courage or the ability to undertake a more inclusive interpretation of American life. The faults of this species of novel are many, and they have been intensified by the reticences and reluctances of the Victorians. And yet, though concern with the provincial scene has for the most part given us an emasculated literature, there is, when characters are drawn from life and not from the established stock of local types, the possibility of portraying certain definite phases of the human tragedy.

It was a very incomplete vision of truth that was vouchsafed Miss Jewett, but it was truth that she saw. Her mode of existence and her training led her to exclude from her fiction much that is important in life, but she was also spared any deep concern with the exciting irrelevancies of modern thought. Her books, portraying a quiet alternation of uncomplaining suffering and unrhapsodic joy, seem to catch a fundamental human rhythm. Though she had the poor taste to admire Aldrich and Lowell, she had the good fortune to spend most of

her days among the kind of people she wrote about. These men and women had neither the time nor the talents to erect those barricades against life which the Bostonian literati were so skilful in constructing. Miss Jewett learned much from her farmers and fishermen, and she might have learned more had it not been for the flaccid influences of the *Atlantic* and its editors and contributors.

She is precious to us not merely for those niceties of style which Mr. Matthiessen points out, nor yet merely because she is, as he admirably shows in his study of the 'nineties, definitely superior to her contemporaries, but also and chiefly because she caught on the Maine coast a glimpse of human reality. For this we forgive, though we do not overlook, her unconscious prudery, her occasional sentimentality, her narrowness of perception. It would be pleasant to think that Mr. Matthiessen's book might serve to bring to her stories the readers they deserve, but one fears that, having too successfully caught the gentleness and unobtrusiveness of her manner, it will lapse into the semi-oblivion that has been Miss Jewett's fate.

GRANVILLE HICKS

A PACKET FOR EZRA POUND. *By William Butler Yeats. Dublin. The Cuala Press.* 1929. 10*s.* 6*d.*

It is difficult to imagine that this little book will give any great pleasure to Mr. Pound, or to anyone else for that matter. Its thirty-seven pages are divided between some ten pages of diary gossip, a score or so for a new introduction to the portion of *A Vision* called The Greal Wheel — this book is evidently being rewritten — and the remainder is occupied with a desultory "letter" to Mr. Pound. The only unity or consistency in the book is to be found in its reflection of Mr. Yeats' mind: he makes play with his old hatred for abstractions, his belief in the revelatory imagination, in the universal bond made between the minds of men by the elemental things that know neither time nor place. The only interest in the book is its description of the manner in which *A Vision* was written, and we are not encouraged to accept this account implicitly, for there is a passage here which recants the original account prefixed to the first issue

of *A Vision*: not that any but the most simple will have accepted that, but that this new account is even as wonderful and no more credible.

He confesses,

> All of *A Vision* except the section on the twenty-eight phases, and that called "Dove or Swan" which I repeat without change fills me with shame. I had misinterpreted the geometry, and in my ignorance of philosophy failed to understand distinctions upon which the coherence of the whole depended, and as my wife was unwilling that her share should be known, and I to seem sole author, I had invented an unnatural story of an Arabian traveller which I must amend and find a place for some day because I was fool enough to write half a dozen poems that are unintelligible without it.

It is well to have this frank explanation for it will always serve to illustrate Mr. Yeats' method of telling the truth in an imaginative or dramatic manner — symbolical precision no doubt. The new account tells that *A Vision* originated with his wife's successful attempt at automatic writing, begun after their marriage in 1917. This was followed by exposition in sleep-speech and continued to 1920 by which time he had fifty copy-books of automatic script and a lesser number of records of what had come in sleep. Then "they" bade him set to writing, and the result was that strange book, *A Vision*, of so much of which he now, very properly most will agree, confesses himself ashamed. The rewriting, apparently, has not been accomplished, as much of it as is ready, without the help of these same otherworld communicators, but Mr. Yeats declares that he is now publishing only what he can understand. The student of Yeats will, doubtless, pick from the present book valuable dates and a fact or two, but although it contains a poem, very little pleasure; and will refer to it, rather, in pity or irritation that the poet has not said to his prose as to his songs,

> Move among the lovers of perfection alone.

S. O'F.

HENRY THE EIGHTH. *By Francis Hackett. New York. Horace Liveright.* 1929. $3.00.

This book has won a conspicuous welcome and approval from the majority of non-historical reviewers. Here at last, they seem to have felt, is a biography unmarred by mistakes of fact, amply grounded in historical research, and safe from professional attack. It satisfies the layman's desire — half snobbish, half sporting — to see the popularizer triumph in the materials of the specialist. No doubt this feeling of vindicated amateurism is justified. Mr. Hackett has made himself an unquestioned master of the period, and put himself in shape to speak with a glibness and minute particularity that defy ordinary criticism. Misprints aside, perhaps the only obvious slip is an incidental reference to Oliver Cromwell as a "descendant" of Thomas Cromwell (p. 413).

Yet the historian though baffled of mere technical errors and weakness, such as have marred a number of recent biographies, has perhaps some right to feel that this book has been over-praised. What after all has Mr. Hackett achieved beyond a *vulgarisation* of somewhat more than average magnitude and pretence? He makes no claim to give us new information. The materials he uses, the brilliant dialogues contained in letters, diaries, ambassadorial reports, have nearly all been used with equal effect elsewhere, in the standard works of Pollard, Froude, Brewer, Friedmann and others. Mr. Hackett's only merit (if it is one) is to have lopped off all references to the sources from which these passages have come, thereby lightening the page, and impressing the inexperienced reader who wonders whether such colorful and modern psychology can really have come from ancient documents. Mr. Hackett may of course be praised for the fluent language on which he sails these splendid relics. His style is capable of the broadest contrasts, dramatic, ironical, poetic, often falling into over-copious alliteration:

> "When there was dirty work to do such as procuring witnesses, serving on juries, hunting down papists or heretics, sitting in parliament or convocation, the test of perfect pliancy was upheld by the piercingly intelligent Cromwell."

Yet the significance of this book, if it has any, does not lie in its style, but rather in the conscious attempt to "be *then-minded,* to use imagination and intuition, to suggest life" (author's Foreword). Mr.

Hackett approaches his task as a "psycho-historian" (a phrase coined, I think, by Gamaliel Bradford). The method is that of a novelist, the underlying attitude, a compound of modern psychology and historical relativity. History is the interaction of the man with a time-environment.

> "Henry cannot be seen apart from his occupation, its nature and its diseases. He was a man before everything, but his kingship colors his drama and sets his scene."

No one could quarrel with this thesis which is essentially that of Pollard, and of anyone who treats this sort of history.

But Mr. Hackett's bias has swung him continually too far; the background is abnormally swallowed in the over-sized foreground of human individualities. True there are abundant pictures of the enviroring times, but they are rather rich and intensive than broad and illuminating. He gives us the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and the Pilgrimage of Grace because they are easy and picturesque and dramatic. But where are the great Parliamentary acts which tore England away from Rome, the Acts of Annates, the Acts of Appeals, the Act of Supremacy, and where are their successors, the acts concerning treason, and those granting Henry the right to dispose of the crown by will, and giving his proclamations the force of law? Where is the great drama which was played round the suppression of the monasteries? These are barely touched, yet they were as much the material of Henry's life as the marvelous nightgown of Anne Boleyn made from fourteen yards of black satin, and the "rather promiscuous, desperately serious, highly lascivious and intensely passionate" circles of youth in which Katheryn Howard passed her way. This is no reproach to the moral tone of the book, which, though realistic, has studiously kept down pornographic sensationalism even where it abounds invitingly in the documents. The fault is aesthetic, and lies rather in the excessive personal concentration which has neglected to create a sufficient backdrop. Brilliant as are some of the characters, they cloy from over-emphasis. The words that are applied to Henry could be re-applied to the book itself, "hot-looking, heavily-perfumed, lightly sweating."

That one should take a hostile attitude toward this book does not mean that one fails to recognize its brilliancy and merit. Beside a slender inexpensive piece of work like *Elizabeth and Essex* it is un-

commonly satisfying as history, and not disappointing as literature. Yet a certain antipathy inspired by the purple blurb lingers throughout the reading. Among other things the jacket boasts that the author spent six years in preparing the book. There is no reason to doubt the statement, but one feels entitled to wonder whether the result was commensurate.

DANA B. DURAND

BELPHEGOR. *By Julian Benda. Translated by S. J. I. Lawson. With an Introduction by Irving Babbitt. New York. Payson and Clarke, Ltd.* 1929. $2.00.

Belphégor, originally published in 1918, is less relevant to criticism at large than *La Trahison des Clercs* and probably owes its American translation to the discussion aroused by the latter. In a review (*The New Republic,* Dec. 12, 1928) of *La Trahison des Clercs* Mr. T. S. Eliot points out that M. Benda was insufficiently critical of the writers he examined; the same fault, perhaps to a greater degree, is exemplified in *Belphégor* with regard to M. Benda's treatment of ideas. *Belphégor* suffers from indistinctness of point of view, as it runs together the notions of concept, symbol, idea, intellect, intelligence, the generic, etc., now applying these touchstones with one set of meanings, now with another.

M. Benda's method of ascertaining the aesthetic of contemporary French society is suspect as he has not weighed his authorities. Under such headings as "The cult of the indistinct," "The religion of music," "That art should present the individual soul," "The demand that art shall be lyrical," etc., M. Benda has grouped his ideas developing them by repetition, generalities, and ironical comments, then adding illustrations from a philosopher-critic (Bergson, Péguy, Ghéon, J. Florence, T. de Visan, etc.), and finally contrasting the statements of the philosopher-critic with those of the exalted but partly adulterated (on M. Benda's admission) seventeenth century. We are to believe that the statements of these writers are not only the genuine reflections of French society but gospel truth. M. Benda never questions the truth and validity of their premises; their statements are ultimate, and M. Benda repeats them as if they were divinely trans-

mitted. There is something awry and terrifying in the deadly earnestness with which M. Benda gives assent to these statements. M. Benda cannot make us believe that he has laid bare the aesthetic demand of French society by superstitiously accepting the views of a few rhapsodists. To make manifest the nature of the aesthetic of French society was the stated intention of M. Benda, but the documents quoted in the footnotes prove that his bogey is M. Bergson, that *Belphégor* is in all essentials a continuation of M. Benda's earlier attacks on Bergsonism, and that *Belphégor* has relevance to French society only in so far as French society exhibits Bergsonian traits. That it exhibits and has exhibited other traits is clear from the works of Rivière, Maritain, Valéry, Meyerson, and Maurras. M. Benda's attack is doubtless justified; but, as in similar attacks, M. Benda's muster of irony and acumen is wasted because of the ephemeral nature of his subject. Arnold's broadsides against British Philistinism are defunct: the present variety has changed its face, is up-to-date, so that if Arnold were alive it would be necessary for him to scrap his nineteenth-century terminology and use that of the present, and so on, ad infinitum. We do not believe that *Belphégor* has indirectly delivered a sharp blow at Bergson's philosophy. The book represents a layman's point of view; and the layman always feels uncomfortable in the presence of a philosophical idea. We admire M. Benda's knowledge of seventeenth-century French literature, but he is not constituted a philosopher thereby. M. Benda has devoted his energies to the exposition of a fashion; with the natural death of that fashion (at least as presented in *Belphégor*) the usefulness of his book has disappeared.

E. B.

POOR WOMEN! *By Norah Hoult. New York. Harper & Brothers.* 1929. $2.50.

Poor Women! is a singularly depressing gallery of seven portraits of women: of Bridget Kiernan, a slatternly kitchen-maid worrying over her possible pregnancy; of Mrs. Johnson, a whore, penniless, sick, and drunken; of Violet Ryder, a drab little office-fool of seventeen, with a nagging mother and a semi-professional harlot for friend

and guiding star; of Alice, a moron small-town church-worker, bitterly conscious of her fading youth, and proud of the cowardice which is respectability; of Miss Jocelyn, a characterless, ineffectual spinster, reduced to dependency upon relatives whom she envies, fears, and dislikes; of Monica, hysterically awaiting the visit of her lover, who has repented and returned to his wife; and of Ethel, sensual, vulgar, tired of her lovers, and trying vainly to recapture comfort and "happiness" by the seduction of her husband, whom she has once deserted, and whom she despises. All of these women, though they differ accidentally, have two essential traits in common: cowardice and laziness. Miss Hoult's thesis seems to be that since the average "unsheltered" woman is economically dependent upon some man or other, an automatic and embittering struggle is set up: the woman's most important job is to ensnare and to conciliate the man, whom she hates, *qua* man, but who is, unfortunately, her sole means of existence. This thesis may be true, although if it *is* true most of us must be astonishingly struthocamelian; But Miss Hoult has not succeeded in demonstrating it. Her poor women are not victims of men whom they must placate. They are victims of themselves — of their own cheap ignobilities, their own mean jealousies, their own vacant imbecility. This, too, of course, is a valid thesis. But it is not, like the other, capable of universal application, as Miss Hoult would apply it. For her characters, live and real as they are, have no general significance: they are individuals, they are un-typical, they are almost studies for a psychiatrist's case-book. One is aware here of the presence of individual misfortune — yes; but since the cases are abnormal to the point almost of caricature, the tragedy is restricted and only superficially moving.

Unfortunately for Miss Hoult, *Poor Women!* challenges comparison with one of the finest (and, incidentally, one of the most neglected) books of the century: Gertrude Stein's *Three Lives*. Miss Stein succeeds precisely where Miss Hoult most importantly fails. The good Anna, the negress Melanctha, and the gentle Lena, do more than live in and of themselves: they are faultlessly drawn individuals, but they are also eternal types. The tragedy of Melanctha is not the tragedy of Melanctha alone; it is the tragedy of all the passionate, selfish, careless, self-pitying women in the world. The tragedy of Miss Hoult's Mrs. Johnson, on the other hand, is proper to, and ends with, Mrs. Johnson. The failure is one of insight and artis-

tic power: Miss Hoult has essayed a task which is beyond her. She sees her women, but she is not enough of a psychologist to be able to understand them. She assembles a great mass of detail, but she lacks the intuitive artistry which discards, selects, and arranges significantly. Where Gertrude Stein, who is a very great artist and psychologist indeed, has given us three *lives*, Miss Hoult has given us seven photographic studies from the life. The difference is fundamental.

DUDLEY FITTS

I THOUGHT OF DAISY. *By Edmund Wilson. New York. Charles Scribner's Sons.* 1929. $2.00.

This book, Mr. Wilson's first in novel form, is a study of artistic life in Greenwich Village, a sketch of atmosphere, and a course in The Life of Reason. The narrative is unimportant; and Mr. Wilson's analysis of character is made almost wholly subordinate to its effect upon the speaking protagonist, the chief — one might say the single — realised person in the book. The form of the book, the shape it assumes in the mind of the reader, is the sense of spiritual change in the mind of the protagonist[1]: so that the book is the manufacture of an attitude.

As a study of artistic life *I Thought of Daisy* is apt, acute, and unpleasant. Two parties are rendered in their entire gin-soaked inanity. The stupid conversations of half a dozen mediocrities are rehearsed and their equally stupid fates indicated. Likewise, the atmosphere of New York is generously conveyed. Mr. Wilson and his protagonist are aware of traffic, harbour smells, streets, Coney Island, kitchens, public statuary, prostitutes, movies, salons, filling stations, and so on. This awareness being in the senses it is translated to the reader.

All this is background. It is the image of the society in which the protagonist is immersed, is almost drowned. It is that society in which personality must either discern the Life of Reason or come to ignominy. Mr. Wilson submits his protagonist to the influence of two women — Rita and Daisy — and two men — Hugo Bamman and Professor Grosbeake. Rita and Hugo Bamman represent respectively

[1] It is difficult to refer to the person who is the subject of this book as he is nowhere named.

the negative, sensual and the positive, intellectual sides of the romantic, passionate, radical, egotistic, and humanitarian attitude toward life. Against these Mr. Wilson endows his protagonist with no natural defences; but rather exposes to them the essential weakness of human character: a weakness the protagonist exercises at every opportunity until he is at the point of intellectual extinction and emotional despair. It is this influence that compels the protagonist to judgments such as this on the creative life, in which he himself had hoped to participate: "And Verlaine, in his prison cell, with his imbecile alternations between piety and pornography — if he had published his religious poems as he had originally intended to do, sandwiched in between his poems of lechery, he would have furnished a perfect example, an example forever ludicrous, of the disorder of the poet's mind." A few pages later, I select these phrases: "Yet the writer had falsified life, because he had pretended to harmonize something of which he was conscious chiefly as chaos, and to explain what he was aware, all too well, he could not fully understand. . . There was the concerted general effort, the gigantic universal imposture, of literature itself. . . As if there could ever be a common denominator, as if there could ever be a fusion or union, between those moments of tranquillity and our moments of pain." Dante, Dostoevsky, Sophocles, and individual life are attacked and discarded.

The first two-thirds of the book explicate this state of mind. Then a visit is paid to Professor Grosbeake whom the protagonist had known, but had not studied under, at college. As a result of this visit and a later one to Daisy and her current paramour Pete in the Adirondacks, a complete reversal of attitude is brought about. Finally, during a trip to Coney Island with Daisy and in his room afterwards, the attitude is made clear and articulate. "As I recalled my gloomy meditations of the night of Sue Borglum's party, I remembered how the Greeks had given Sophocles the name of 'the Attic Bee.' Yes: I saw it: there it was: it was acrid, but still honey; and it was something more than beauty of verse. . . It was not that the Athenian jury had merely demonstrated their gratitude for — that the crowds at Dostoevsky's funeral had merely regretted being deprived of — a sedative to which they had become addicted; but that both had been ravished by the taste — and by it had been partly repaid for the harshness of the common life — of the miraculous secretion of the mind

which there was only one man to supply." And finally, thinking of Daisy, the ordinary American woman of whom anything might be made, there is the assertion of unanimity: "What relief and what a rebirth, our only real birth into this world, when from the fears and snobberies of youth, from all our preconceived ideas, from all those foolish abstractions we learn, all those things that we think we think, we find at last in these beings who have crowded, offended, disgusted or fought us, that interest and that value which we have found only in a few or in one — when, youth's passion and anguish spent, we see rising about us that reality of those we have looked on as strangers, and know that it is our reality — that what is strange to us is strange to them, that what hurts them hurts us, that what is good for them is good for us — when we no longer dread the fool nor hate the one who wounds us, but can sleep in our beds in peace and in peace face the waking world!"

The book, then, is the rediscovery of traditional wisdom, the reassertion of faith in rational life. Its great virtue is that the mind that is here awakened, awakes in the contemporary scene envisaged realistically. The great defect of the book is that it is not a novel but an essay, partly in the guise of fiction, about life; and I think, from a technical point of view, that this defect exists largely because Mr. Wilson chose to have the protagonist act as narrator. Thus it is very difficult to see what happens to the narrator except as he from time to time writes down his reflections. The limitation is not so much too severe as it is the wrong kind of limitation for the theme: it makes proof dialectical, argumentative; and proof, in a novel, should be dramatic — in action and feeling — when the protagonist's reflections would flow necessarily from his experience, and when, better still, his reflections would be his experience. As it is, we have an extraordinarily interesting book instead of an extraordinary novel.

R. P. Blackmur

Things to Come. *By John Middleton Murry. New York. The Macmillan Company.* 1928. $2.50.

Mr. Murry combines three offices in this bewildering miscellany; he is an essayist, a philosophic writer, and a prophet. "The Divine

Plain Force" is a most charming bit on Charles Lamb's love for Fanny Kelly and rejected proposal, a precious cameo concealed under a mass of confused apocalyptic canvasses. The "Need of a New Psychology" states loosely one useful method for ethical study. "Man is what he is potentially, he is that more truly than he is anything else. That may seem nonsense to some minds, but let us ask them quite simply how are we to describe, in what terms can we define, a living and evolving creature, save in terms of what it may become. We do not know what it may become, says the unimaginative rationalist. But we *do* know. Take all the heroes of humanity; choose from among them those who have made the deepest and most permanent appeal to man; try to discover what those men really were; if you can discover it, that is what man *is*."

This method, if it is to be pursued, requires a careful, analytic, rational mind. Mr. Murry, whose mind like everyone else's is lazy, unlike any genuine thinker, neglects to discipline it, and rhapsodizes vaguely on intuition, imagination, and new syntheses. Here are some of his conclusions: "Jesus' God, the good God, the loving God, the Father Almighty, did not exist. Jesus died knowing it." "I hold that we humans have it in us to make God what we desire. If we truly desire a loving God, we can have him — at the price. The method of God-creation is simple: you have only to remember the simple fact that what you do, God does; what you are, God is. . . . Every man has the responsibility for God upon his shoulders." "In this matter I have no desire to be original; nor have I any overwhelming desire to be understood." "A modern man will more quickly and more truly find what the Kingdom of Heaven means from Shakespeare than he will from the New Testament itself." "I, as my readers should know by this time, am a Romantic." Mr. Murry's manner is that of "Verily I say unto you." Unfortunately he speaks not as one having authority

BERNARD BANDLER II

Pages 139-140 omitted in numbering.